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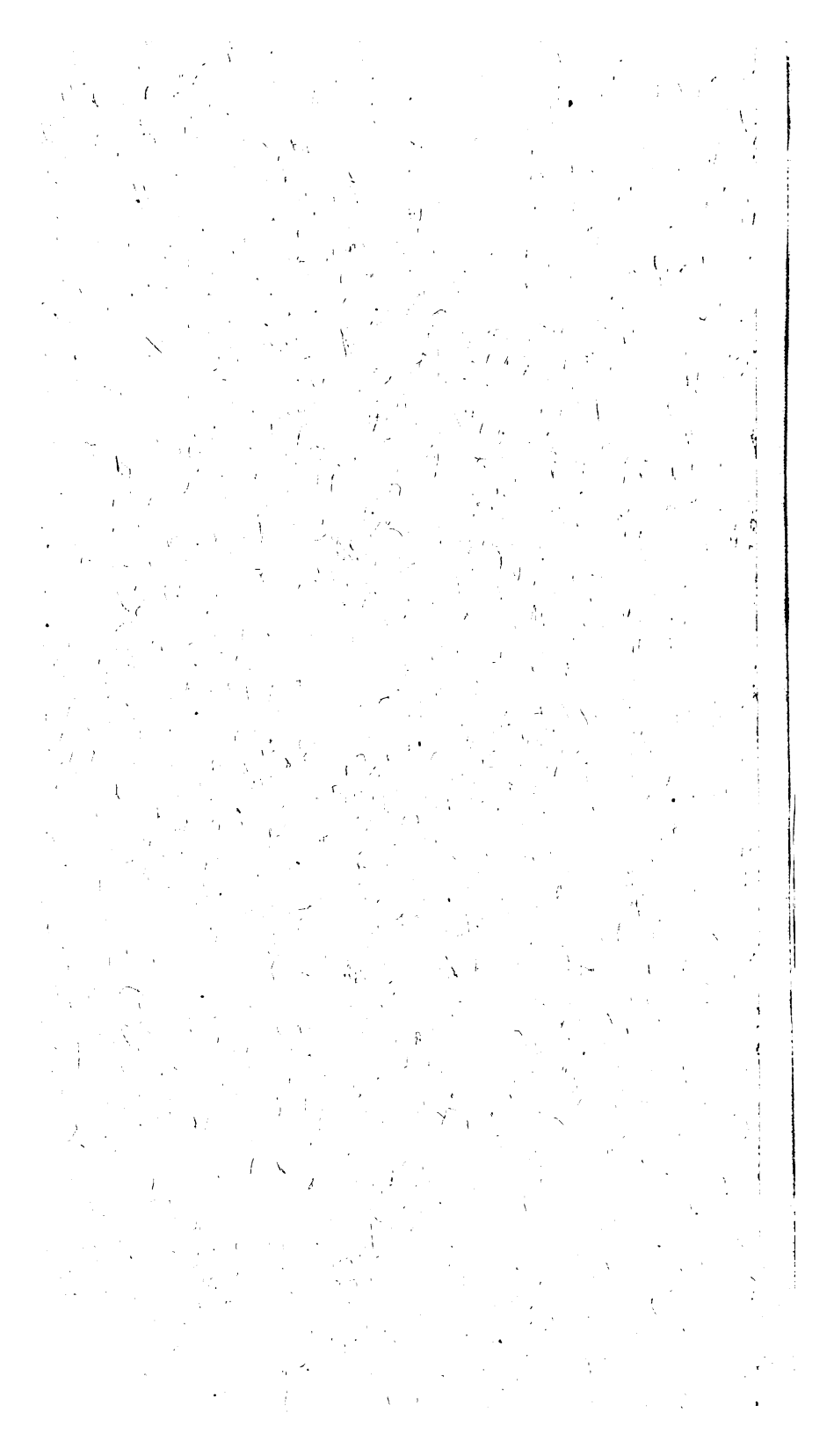
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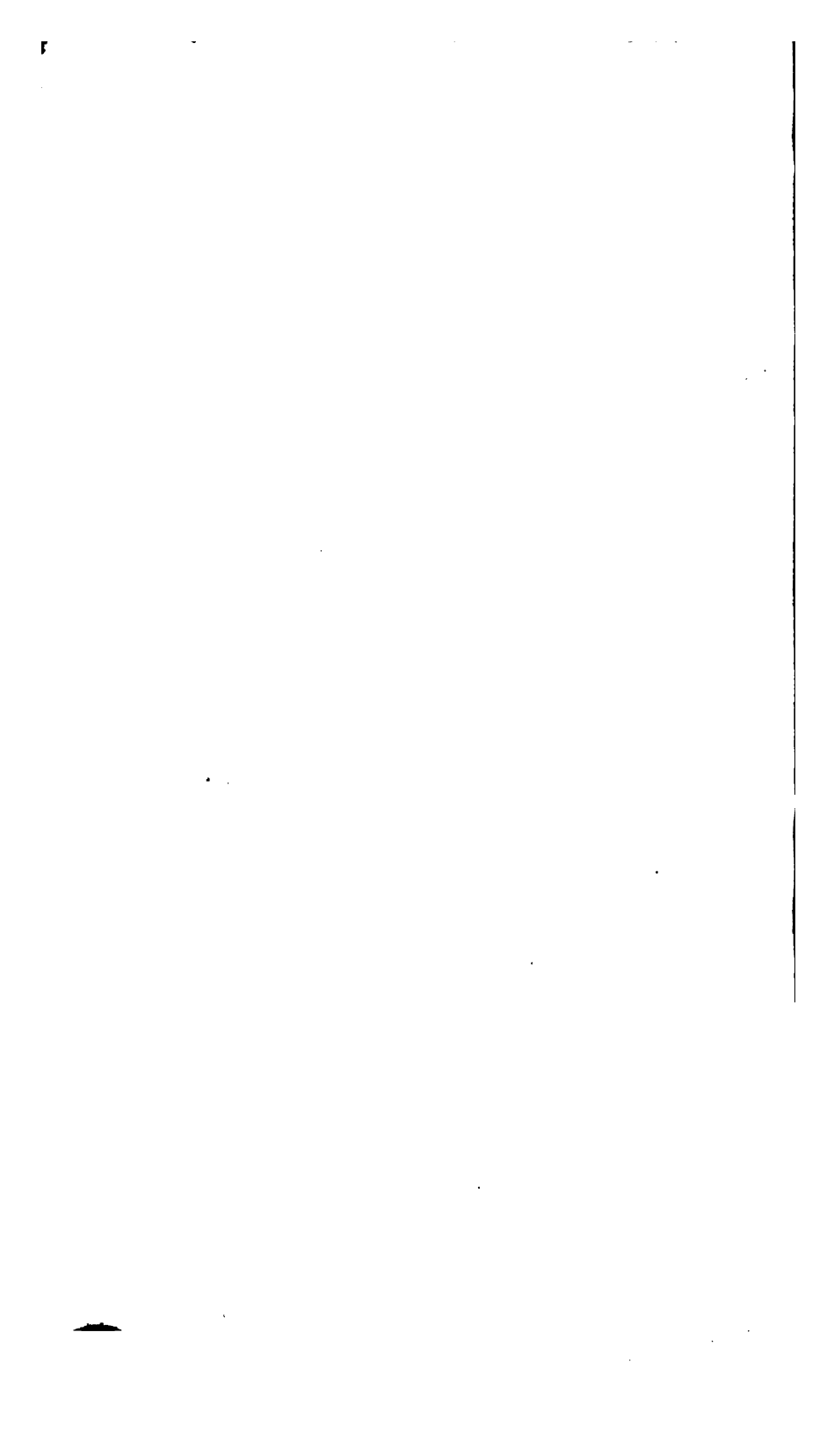














1812

THE  
(Y.D.)

**ELEMENTS**

OF

**CRITICISM.**



1

BY THE HONORABLE

**HENRY HOME OF KAMES,**

ONE OF THE SENATORS OF THE COLLEGE OF JUSTICE, AND ONE OF THE  
LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF JUSTICIARY IN SCOTLAND.



THIRD AMERICAN FROM THE EIGHTH LONDON EDITION.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

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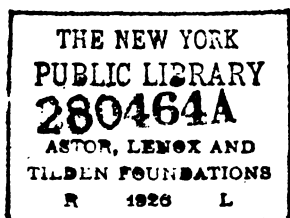


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## TO THE KING.

SIR.

THE Fine Arts have ever been encouraged by wise Princes, not singly for private amusement, but for their beneficial influence in society. By uniting different ranks in the same elegant pleasures, they promote benevolence : by cherishing love of order, they enforce submission to government : and by inspiring delicacy of feeling, they make regular government a double blessing.

THESE considerations embolden me to hope for your Majesty's patronage in behalf of the following work, which treats of the Fine Arts, and attempts to form a standard of taste, by unfolding those principles that ought to govern the taste of every individual.

It is rare to find one born with such delicacy of feeling, as not to need instruction : it is equally rare



to find one so low in feeling, as not to be capable of instruction. And yet, to refine our taste with respect to beauties of art or of nature, is scarce endeavoured in any seminary of learning ; a lamentable defect, considering how early in life taste is susceptible of culture, and how difficult to reform it if unhappily perverted. To furnish materials for supplying that defect, was an additional motive for the present undertaking,

To promote the Fine Arts in Britain, has become of greater importance than is generally imagined. A flourishing commerce begets opulence ; and opulence, inflaming our appetite for pleasure, is commonly vented on luxury, and on every sensual gratification : Selfishness rears its head ; becomes fashionable ; and, infecting all ranks, extinguishes the *amor patriæ*, and every spark of public spirit. To prevent or to retard such fatal corruption, the genius of an Alfred cannot devise any means more efficacious, than the venting opulence upon the Fine Arts : riches so employed, instead of encouraging vice, will excite both public and private virtue. Of this happy effect, ancient Greece furnishes one shining instance ; and why should we despair of another in Britain ?

In the commencement of an auspicious reign, and even in that early period of life when pleasure commonly is the sole pursuit, your Majesty has uniformly displayed to a delighted people, the noblest



principles, ripened by early culture ; and, for that reason, you will be the more disposed to favor every rational plan for advancing the art of training up youth. Among the many branches of education, that which tends to make deep impressions of virtue, ought to be a fundamental object in a well-regulated government : for depravity of manners will render ineffectual the most salutary laws ; and, in the midst of opulence, what other means to prevent such depravity but early and virtuous discipline ? The British discipline is susceptible of great improvements ; and, if we can hope for them, it must be from a young and accomplished Prince, eminently sensible of their importance. To establish a complete system of education, seems reserved by Providence for a sovereign who commands the hearts of his subjects. Success will crown the undertaking, and endear **GEORGE THE THIRD** to our latest posterity.

**THE** most elevated and most refined pleasure of human nature, is enjoyed by a virtuous Prince governing a virtuous people ; and that, by perfecting the great system of education, your Majesty may very long enjoy this pleasure, is the ardent wish of

Your Majesty's

Devoted Subject,

**HENRY HOME.**

**Dec. 1761.**







## **PREFACE**

TO

### **THE THIRD EDITION.**

**PRINTING**, by multiplying copies at will, affords to writers great opportunity of receiving instruction from every quarter. The author of this treatise, having always been of opinion that the general taste is seldom wrong, was resolved from the beginning to submit to it with entire resignation : its severest disapprobation might have incited him to do better, but never to complain. Finding now the judgment of the public to be favourable, ought he not to draw satisfaction from it? He would be devoid of sensibility were he not greatly satisfied. Many criticisms have indeed reached his ear ; but they are candid and benevolent, if not always just. Gratitude, therefore, had there been no other motive, must have roused his utmost industry, to clear this edition from all the defects of the former, so far as suggested by others, or discovered by himself. In a work containing many particulars, both new and



abstruse, it was difficult to express every article with sufficient perspicuity ; and, after all the pains bestowed, there remained certain passages which are generally thought obscure. The author, giving an attentive ear to every censure of that kind, has, in the present edition, renewed his efforts to correct every defect : and he would gladly hope that he has not been altogether unsuccessful. The truth is, that a writer, who must be possessed of the thought before he can put it into words, is but ill qualified to judge whether the expression be sufficiently clear to others ; in that particular, he cannot avoid the taking on him to judge for the reader, who can much better judge for himself.

JUNE, 1763.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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THAT nothing external is perceived till first it make an impression upon the organ of sense, is an observation that holds equally in every one of the external senses. But there is a difference as to our knowledge of that impression: in touching, tasting, and smelling, we are sensible of the impression; that, for example, which is made upon the hand by a stone, upon the palate by an apricot, and upon the nostrils by a rose: it is otherwise in seeing and hearing; for I am not sensible of the impression made upon my eye, when I behold a tree; nor of the impression made upon my ear, when I listen to a song.\* That difference in the manner of perceiving external objects, distinguisheth remarkably hearing and seeing from the other senses; and I am ready to show, that it distinguisheth still more remarkably the feelings of the former from that of the latter; every feeling, pleasant or painful, must be in the mind; and yet, because in tasting, touching, and smelling, we are sensible of the impression made upon the organ, we are led to place there also the pleasant or painful feeling caused by that impression;†

\* See the Appendix, § 13.

† After the utmost efforts, we find it beyond our power to conceive the flavour of a rose to exist in the mind: we are necessarily led to conceive that pleasure as existing in the nostrils along with the impression made by the rose upon that organ. And the same will be the result of experiments, with respect to every feeling of taste, touch, and smell. Touch affords the most satisfactory experiments. Were it not that the delusion is detected by philosophy, no person would hesitate to pronounce, that the pleasure arising from touching a smooth, soft, and velvet surface, has its existence at the ends of the fingers, without once dreaming of its existing any where else.



but, with respect to seeing and hearing, being insensible of the organic impression, we are not misled to assign a wrong place to the pleasant or painful feelings caused by that impression; and therefore we naturally place them in the mind, where they really are: upon that account, they are conceived to be more refined and spiritual, than what are derived from tasting, touching, and smelling; for the latter feelings, seeming to exist externally at the organ of sense, are conceived to be merely corporeal.

The pleasures of the eye and the ear, being thus elevated above those of the other external senses, acquire so much dignity as to become a laudable entertainment. They are not, however, set on a level with the purely intellectual; being no less inferior in dignity to intellectual pleasures, than superior to the organic or corporeal: they indeed resemble the latter, being, like them, produced by external objects; but they also resemble the former, being, like them, produced without any sensible organic impression. Their mixed nature and middle place between organic and intellectual pleasures, qualify them to associate with both; beauty heightens all the organic feelings, as well as the intellectual: harmony, though it aspires to inflame devotion, disdains not to improve the relish of a banquet.

The pleasures of the eye and the ear have other valuable properties beside those of dignity and elevation: being sweet and moderately exhilarating, they are in their tone equally distant from the turbulence of passion, and the languor of indolence: and by that tone are perfectly well qualified, not only to revive the spirits when sunk by sensual gratification, but also to relax them when overstrained in any violent pursuit. Here is a remedy



provided for many distresses ; and, to be convinced of its salutary effects, it will be sufficient to run over the following particulars. Organic pleasures have naturally a short duration ; when prolonged, they lose their relish ; when indulged to excess, they beget satiety and disgust : and, to restore a proper tone of mind, nothing can be more happily contrived than the exhilarating pleasures of the eye and ear. On the other hand, any intense exercise of intellectual powers, becomes painful by overstraining the mind : cessation from such exercise gives not instant relief ; it is necessary that the void be filled with some amusement, gently relaxing the spirits ;\* organic pleasure, which hath no relish but while we are in vigour, is ill qualified for that office ; but the finer pleasures of sense, which occupy without exhausting the mind, are finely qualified to restore its usual tone after severe application to study or business, as well as after satiety from sensual gratification.

Our first perceptions are of external objects, and our first attachments are to them. Organic pleasures take the lead : but the mind, gradually ripening, relisheth more and more the pleasures of the eye and ear ; which approach the purely mental, without exhausting the spirits ; and exceed the purely sensual, without danger of satiety. The pleasures of the eye and ear have accordingly a natural aptitude to draw us from the immoderate gratification of sensual appetite ; and the mind, once accustomed to enjoy a variety of external objects without being sensible of the organic impression, is prepared for enjoying internal objects where there cannot be an organic impression. Thus

\* De Bos judiciously observes, that silence doth not tend to calm an agitated mind ; but that soft and slow music hath a fine effect.



the Author of nature, by qualifying the human mind for a succession of enjoyments from low to high, leads it by gentle steps from the most grovelling corporeal pleasures, for which only it is fitted in the beginning of life, to those refined and sublime pleasures that are suited to its maturity.

But we are not bound down to this succession by any law of necessity : the God of nature offers it to us, in order to advance our happiness ; and it is sufficient, that he hath enabled us to carry it on in a natural course. Nor has he made our task either disagreeable or difficult ; on the contrary, the transition is sweet and easy, from corporeal pleasures to the more refined pleasures of sense ; and no less so, from these to the exalted pleasures of morality and religion. We stand therefore engaged in honour, as well as interest, to second the purposes of nature, by cultivating the pleasures of the eye and ear, those especially that require extraordinary culture,\* such as arise from poetry, painting, sculpture, music, gardening, and architecture. This especially is the duty of the opulent, who have leisure to improve their minds and their feelings. The fine arts are contrived to give pleasure to the eye and the ear, disregarding the inferior senses. A taste for these arts is a plant that grows naturally in many soils ; but, without culture, scarce to perfection in any soil : it is susceptible of much refinement ; and is, by proper care, greatly improved. In this respect, a taste in the fine arts goes

\* A taste for natural objects is born with us in perfection ; for relating a fine countenance, a rich landscape, or a vivid colour, culture is necessary. The observation holds equally in natural sounds, such as the singing of birds, or the murmuring of a brook. Nature here, the artificer of the object, as well as of the percipient, hath accurately suited them to each other. But of a poem, a cantata, a picture, or other artificial production, a true relish is not commonly attained, without some study and much practice.



hand in hand with the moral sense, to which indeed it is nearly allied: both of them discover what is right and what is wrong; fashion, temper, and education have an influence to vitiate both, or to preserve them pure and untainted: neither of them are arbitrary nor local; being rooted in human nature, and governed by principles common to all men. The design of the present undertaking, which aspires not to morality, is, to examine the sensitive branch of human nature; to trace the objects that are naturally agreeable, as well as those that are naturally disagreeable; and by these means to discover, if we can, what are the genuine principles of the fine arts. The man who aspires to be a critic in these arts must pierce still deeper: he must acquire a clear perception of what objects are lofty, what low, what proper or improper, what manly, and what mean or trivial. Hence a foundation for reasoning upon the taste of any individual, and for passing sentence upon it: where it is conformable to principles, we can pronounce with certainty that it is correct; otherwise, that it is incorrect, and perhaps whimsical. Thus the fine arts, like morals, become a rational science; and, like morals, may be cultivated to a high degree of refinement.

Manifold are the advantages of criticism, when thus studied as a rational science. In the first place a thorough acquaintance with the principles of the fine arts, redoubles the pleasure we derive from them. To the man who resigns himself to feeling without interposing any judgment, poetry, music, painting, are mere pastime. In the prime of life, indeed, they are delightful, being supported by the force of novelty, and the heat of imagination: but in time they lose their relish; and are generally neglected in the maturity of life, which disposes to



more serious and more important occupations. To those who deal in criticism as a regular science, governed by just principles, and giving scope to judgment as well as to fancy, the fine arts are a favourite entertainment; and in old age maintain that relish which they produce in the morning of life.\*

In the next place, a philosophic inquiry into the principles of the fine arts, inures the reflecting mind to the most enticing sort of logic: the practice of reasoning upon subjects so agreeable, tends to a habit; and a habit, strengthening the reasoning faculties, prepares the mind for entering into subjects more intricate and abstract. To have, in that respect, a just conception of the importance of criticism, we need but reflect upon the ordinary method of education; which, after some years spent in acquiring languages, hurries us, without the least preparatory discipline, into the most profound philosophy. A more effectual method to alienate the tender mind from abstract science, is beyond the reach of invention: and accordingly, with respect to such speculations, our youth generally contract a sort of hobgoblin terror, seldom if ever subdued. Those who apply to the arts, are trained in a very different manner: they are led, step by step, from the easier parts of the operation, to what are more difficult; and are not permitted to make a new motion, till they are perfected in those which go before. Thus the science of criticism may be considered as a middle link, connecting the different parts of education into a regular chain. This science furnisheth an inviting opportunity to

\* "Though logic may subsist without rhetoric or poetry, yet so necessary  
"to these last is a sound and correct logic, that without it they are no better  
"than warbling trifles." *Hermes*, p. 6.



exercise the judgment ; we delight to reason upon subjects that are equally pleasant and familiar : we proceed gradually from the simpler to the more involved cases ; and in a due course of discipline, custom, which improves all our faculties, bestows acuteness on that of reason, sufficient to unravel all the intricacies of philosophy.

Nor ought it to be overlooked, that the reasonings employed on the fine arts are of the same kind with those which regulate our conduct. Mathematical and metaphysical reasonings have no tendency to improve our knowledge of man ; nor are they applicable to the common affairs of life : but a just taste of the fine arts, derived from rational principles, furnishes elegant subjects for conversation, and prepares us for acting in the social state with dignity and propriety.

The science of rational criticism tends to improve the heart no less than the understanding. It tends, in the first place, to moderate the selfish affections : by sweetening and harmonising the temper, it is a strong antidote to the turbulence of passion, and violence of pursuit ; it procures to a man so much mental enjoyment, that in order to be occupied, he is not tempted to deliver up his youth to hunting, gaming, drinking ;\* nor his middle age to ambition ; nor his old age to avarice. Pride and envy, two disgustful passions, find in the constitution no enemy more formidable than a delicate and discerning taste : the man upon whom nature and culture have bestowed this blessing, delights in the virtuous dispositions and actions of others ; he

\* If any youth of a splendid fortune and English education stumble perchance upon this book and this passage, he will pronounce the latter to be empty declamation. But if he can be prevailed upon to make the experiment, he will find, much to his satisfaction, every article well founded.



loves to cherish them, and to publish them to the world : faults and failings, it is true, are to him no less obvious ; but these he avoids, or removes out of sight, because they give him pain. On the other hand, a man void of taste, upon whom even striking beauties make but a faint impression, indulges pride or envy without controul, and loves to brood over errors and blemishes. In a word, there are other passions, that upon occasion, may disturb the peace of society more than those mentioned ; but not another passion is so unwearied an antagonist to the sweets of social intercourse : pride and envy put a man perpetually in opposition to others ; and dispose him to relish bad more than good qualities, even in a companion. How different that disposition of mind, where every virtue in a companion or neighbour is, by refinement of taste, set in its strongest light ; and defects or blemishes, natural to all, are suppressed, or kept out of view !

In the next place, delicacy of taste tends no less to invigorate the social affections, than to moderate those that are selfish. To be convinced of that tendency, we need only reflect, that delicacy of taste necessarily heightens our feeling of pain and pleasure ; and of course our sympathy, which is the capital branch of every social passion. Sympathy invites a communication of joys and sorrows, hopes and fears : such exercise, soothing and satisfactory in itself, is necessarily productive of mutual good-will and affection.

One other advantage of rational criticism is reserved to the last place, being of all the most important ; which is, that it is a great support to morality. I insist on it with entire satisfaction, that no occupation attaches a man more to his duty, than that of cultivating a taste in the fine arts : a just



relish of what is beautiful, proper, elegant, and ornamental, in writing or painting, in architecture or gardening, is a fine preparation for the same just relish of these qualities in character and behaviour. To the man who has acquired a taste so acute and accomplished, every action wrong or improper must be highly disgusting : if, in any instance, the overbearing power of passion sway him from his duty, he returns to it with redoubled resolution never to be swayed a second time : he has now an additional motive to virtue, a conviction derived from experience, that happiness depends on regularity and order, and that disregard to justice or propriety never fails to be punished with shame and remorse.\*

Rude ages exhibit the triumph of authority over reason : Philosophers anciently were divided into sects, being Epicureans, Platonists, Stoics, Pythagoreans, or Sceptics : the speculative relied no farther on their own judgment but to choose a leader, whom they implicitly followed. In later times, happily, reason hath obtained the ascendant : men now assert their native privilege of thinking for themselves ; and disdain to be ranked in any sect, whatever be the science. I am forced to except criticism, which, by what fatality I know not, continues to be no less slavish in its principles, nor less submissive to authority, than it was originally. Bossu, a celebrated French critic, gives many rules ; but can discover no better foundation for any of them, than the practice merely of Homer

\* Genius is allied to a warm and inflammable constitution ; delicacy of taste to calmness and sedateness. Hence it is common to find genius in one who is a prey to every passion ; but seldom delicacy of taste. Upon a man possessed of that blessing, the moral duties, no less than the fine arts, make a deep impression, and counterbalance every irregular desire ; at the same time, a temper calm and sedate is not easily moved, even by a strong temptation.



and Virgil, supported by the authority of Aristotle: Strange! than in so long a work, he should never once have stumbled upon the question, Whether; and how far, do these rules agree with human nature. It could not surely be his opinion, that these poets, however eminent for genius, were entitled to give law to mankind; and that nothing now remains, but blind obedience to their arbitrary will; if in writing they followed no rule, why should they be imitated? If they studied nature, and were obsequious to rational principles, why should these be concealed from us?

With respect to the present undertaking, it is not the author's intention to compose a regular treatise upon each of the fine arts; but only, in general, to exhibit their fundamental principles, drawn from human nature, the true source of criticism. The fine arts are intended to entertain us, by making pleasant impressions; and, by that circumstance, are distinguished from the useful arts; but, in order to make pleasant impressions, we ought, as above hinted, to know what objects are naturally agreeable, and what naturally disagreeable. That subject is here attempted, as far as necessary for unfolding the genuine principles of the fine arts; and the author assumes no merit from his performance, but that of evincing, perhaps more distinctly than hitherto has been done, that these principles, as well as every just rule of criticism, are founded upon the sensitive part of our nature. What the author hath discovered or collected upon that subject, he chooses to impart in the gay and agreeable form of criticism; imagining that this form will be more relished, and perhaps be no less instructive, than a regular and laboured disquisition. His plan is, to ascend gradually to principles, from facts and experiments; instead of be-



ginning with the former, handled abstractedly, and descending to the latter. But, though criticism is thus his only declared aim, he will not disown, that all along it has been his view, to explain the nature of Man, considered as a sensitive being capable of pleasure and pain: and, though he flatters himself with having made some progress in that important science, he is, however, too sensible of its extent and difficulty, to undertake it professedly, or to avow it as the chief purpose of the present work.

To censure works, not men, is the just prerogative of criticism; and accordingly all personal censure is here avoided, unless where necessary to illustrate some general proposition. No praise is claimed on that account; because censuring with a view merely to find fault, cannot be entertaining to any person of humanity. Writers, one should imagine, ought, above all others, to be reserved on that article, when they lie so open to retaliation. The author of this treatise, far from being confident of meriting no censure, entertains not even the slightest hope of such perfection. Amusement was at first the sole aim of his inquiries: proceeding from one particular to another, the subject grew under his hand; and he was far advanced before the thought struck him, that his private meditations might be publicly useful. In public, however, he would not appear in a slovenly dress; and therefore he pretends not otherwise to apologise for his errors, than by observing, that in a new subject, no less nice than extensive, errors are in some measure unavoidable. Neither pretends he to justify his taste in every particular: that point must be extremely clear, which admits not variety of opinion; and in some matters susceptible of great refinement, time is perhaps the only infallible touch-



stone of taste : to that he appeals, and to that he cheerfully submits.

N. B. THE ELEMENTS OF CRITICISM, meaning the whole, is a title too assuming for this work. A number of these elements or principles are here unfolded : but, as the author is far from imagining that he has completed the list, a more humble title is proper, such as may express any number of parts less than the whole. This he thinks is signified by the title he has chosen, viz. ELEMENTS OF CRITICISM.



# ELEMENTS OF CRITICISM.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *Perceptions and Ideas in a Train.*

A MAN, while awake, is conscious of a continued train of perceptions and ideas passing in his mind. It requires no activity on his part to carry on the train: nor can he at will add any idea to the train.\* At the same time, we learn from daily experience, that the train of our thoughts is not regulated by chance: and if it depend not upon will, nor upon chance, by what law is it governed? The question is of importance in the science of human nature; and I promise beforehand, that it will be found of great importance in the fine arts.

\* For how should this be done? what idea is it that we are to add? If we can specify the idea, that idea is already in the mind, and there is no occasion for any act of the will. If we cannot specify any idea, I next demand, how can a person will, or to what purpose, if there be nothing in view? We cannot form a conception of such a thing. If this argument need confirmation, I urge experience: whoever makes a trial will find, that ideas are linked together in the mind, forming a connected chain; and that we have not the command of any idea independent of the chain.



It appears, that the relations by which things are linked together, have a great influence in directing the train of thought. Taking a view of external objects, their inherent properties are not more remarkable, than the various relations that connect them together: Cause and effect, contiguity in time or in place, high and low, prior and posterior, resemblance, contrast, and a thousand other relations, connect things together without end. Not a single thing appears solitary and altogether devoid of connexion; the only difference is, that some are intimately connected, some more slightly; some near, some at a distance.

Experience will satisfy us of what reason makes probable, that the train of ~~our~~ thoughts is in a great measure regulated by the foregoing relations: an external object is no sooner presented to us in idea, than it suggests to the mind other objects to which it is related; and in that manner is a train of thoughts composed. Such is the law of succession; which must be natural, because it governs all human beings. The law, however, seems not to be inviolable: it sometimes happens that an idea arises in the mind, without any perceived connexion; as, for example, after a profound sleep.

But, though we cannot add to the train an unconnected idea, yet in a measure we can attend to some ideas, and dismiss others. There are few things but what are connected with many others; and when a thing thus connected becomes a subject of thought, it commonly suggests many of its connexions: among these a choice is afforded; we can insist upon one, rejecting others; and sometimes we insist on what is commonly held the slightest connexion. Where ideas are left to their natural course, they are continued through the strictest connexions: the mind extends its view to



a son more readily than to a servant; and more readily to a neighbour than to one living at a distance. This order, as observed, may be varied by will, but still within the limits of related objects; for though we can vary the order of a natural train, we cannot dissolve the train altogether, by carrying on our thoughts in a loose manner without any connexion. So far doth our power extend; and that power is sufficient for all useful purposes: to have more power, would probably be hurtful, instead of being salutary.

*Will* is not the only cause that prevents a train of thought from being continued through the strictest connexions: much depends on the present tone of mind: for a subject that accords with that tone is always welcome. Thus, in good spirits, a cheerful subject will be introduced by the slightest connexion; and one that is melancholy, no less readily in low spirits: an interesting subject is recalled, from time to time, by any connexion indifferently, strong or weak; which is finely touched by Shakspear, with relation to a rich cargo at sea:

My wind, cooking my broth,  
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought  
What harm a wind, too great, might do at sea.  
I should not see the sandy-hour glass run,  
But I should think of shallows and of flats;  
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,  
Vailing her high top lower than her ribs,  
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church,  
And see the holy edifice of stone,  
And not bethink me strait of dangerous rocks?  
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,  
Would scatter all the spices on the stream,  
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks;  
And, in a word, but now worth this,  
And now worth nothing.

*Merchant of Venice, Act I. Sc. 1.*



Another cause clearly distinguishable from that now mentioned, hath also a considerable influence to vary the natural train of ideas; which is, that, in the minds of some persons, thoughts and circumstances crowd upon each other by the slightest connexions. I ascribe this to a bluntness in the discerning faculty; for a person who cannot accurately distinguish between a slight connexion and one that is more intimate, is equally affected by each: such a person must necessarily have a great flow of ideas, because they are introduced by any relation indifferently; and the slighter relations, being without number, furnish ideas without end. This doctrine is, in a lively manner, illustrated by Shakspeare.

*Falstaff.* What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

*Hostess.* Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and thy money too. Thou didst swear to me on a parcel-gilt-goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsan-week, when the Prince broke thy head for likening him to a singing man of Windsor; thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my Lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not Goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then, and call me Gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound. And didst not thou, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people, saying, that ere long they should call me Madam? And didst thou not kiss me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book-oath, deny it if thou canst?

*Second Part, Henry IV. Act II. Sc. 2.*

On the other hand a man of accurate judgment cannot have a great flow of ideas; because the slighter relations, making no figure in his mind, have no power to introduce ideas. And hence it



is, that accurate judgment is not friendly to declamation or copious eloquence. This reasoning is confirmed by experience; for it is a noted observation, That a great or comprehensive memory is seldom connected with a good judgment.

As an additional confirmation, I appeal to another noted observation, That wit and judgment are seldom united. Wit consists chiefly in joining things by distant and fanciful relations, which surprise because they are unexpected: such relations, being of the slightest kind, readily occur to those only who make every relation equally welcome. Wit, upon that account, is in a good measure incompatible with solid judgment; which, neglecting trivial relations, adheres to what are substantial and permanent. Thus memory and wit are often conjoined: solid judgment seldom with either.

Every man who attends to his own ideas, will discover order as well as connexion in their succession. There is implanted in the breast of every man a principle of order, which governs the arrangement of his perceptions, of his ideas, and of his actions. With regard to perceptions, I observe that, in things of equal rank, such as sheep in a fold, or trees in a wood, it must be indifferent in what order they be surveyed. But, in things of unequal rank, our tendency is, to view the principal subject before we descend to its accessories or ornaments, and the superior before the inferior or dependent; we are equally averse to enter into a minute consideration of constituent parts, till the thing be first surveyed as a whole. It need scarce be added, that our ideas are governed by the same principle; and that, in thinking or reflecting upon a number of objects, we naturally follow the same order as when we actually survey them.



The principle of order is conspicuous with respect to natural operations; for it always directs our ideas in the order of nature: thinking upon a body in motion, we follow its natural course; the mind falls with a heavy body, descends with a river, and ascends with flame and smoke: in tracing out a family, we incline to begin at the founder, and to descend gradually to his latest posterity; on the contrary, musing on a lofty oak, we begin at the trunk, and mount from it to the branches: as to historical facts, we love to proceed in the order of time; or, which comes to the same, to proceed along the chain of causes and effects.

But though in following out an historical chain, our bent is to proceed orderly from causes to their effects, we find not the same bent in matters of science: there we seem rather disposed to proceed from effects to their causes, and from particular propositions to those which are more general. Why this difference in matters that appear so nearly related? I answer, The cases are similar in appearance only, not in reality. In an historical chain, every event is particular, the effect of some former event, and the cause of others that follow: in such a chain, there is nothing to bias the mind from the order of nature. Widely different is science, when we endeavour to trace out causes and their effects: many experiments are commonly reduced under one cause; and again, many of these causes under one still more general and comprehensive: in our progress from particular effects to general causes, and from particular propositions to the more comprehensive, we feel a gradual dilatation or expansion of mind, like what is felt in an ascending series which is extremely pleasing: the pleasure here exceeds what arises from following the course of nature; and it is that pleasure which regulates



our train of thought in the case now mentioned, and in others that are similar. These observations, by the way, furnish materials for instituting a comparison between the synthetic and analytic methods of reasoning: the synthetic method, descending regularly from principles to their consequences, is more agreeable to the strictness of order; but in following the opposite course in the analytic method we have a sensible pleasure, like mounting upward which is not felt in the other: the analytic method is more agreeable to the imagination; the other method will be preferred by those only who with rigidity adhere to order, and give no indulgence to natural emotions.\*

It now appears that we are framed by nature to relish order and connexion. When an object is introduced by a proper connexion, we are conscious of a certain pleasure arising from that circumstance. Among objects of equal rank, the pleasure is proportioned to the degree of connexion: but among unequal objects, where we require a certain order, the pleasure arises chiefly from an orderly arrangement; of which one is sensible, in tracing objects contrary to the course of nature, or contrary to our sense of order: the mind proceeds with alacrity down a flowing river, and with the same alacrity from a whole to its parts, or from a principal to its accessories; but in the contrary direction, it is sensible of a sort of retrograde motion, which is unpleasant. And here may be remarked the great influence of order upon the mind of man: grandeur, which makes a deep impression inclines us, in running over any series, to proceed from small to great, rather than from great to small; but order

\* A train of perceptions or ideas, with respect to its uniformity and variety, is handled afterwards, chap. 9.



prevails over that tendency, and affords pleasure as well as facility in passing from a whole to its parts, and from a subject to its ornaments, which are not felt in the opposite course. Elevation touches the mind no less than grandeur doth; and in raising the mind to elevated objects, there is a sensible pleasure: the course of nature, however, hath still a greater influence than elevation; and therefore, the pleasure of falling with rain, and descending gradually with a river, prevails over that of mounting upward. But where the course of nature is joined with elevation, the effect must be delightful: and hence the singular beauty of smoke ascending in a calm morning.

I am extremely sensible of the disgust men generally have to abstract speculation; and I would avoid it altogether, if it could be done in a work that professes to draw the rules of criticism from human nature, their true source. We have but a single choice, which is, to continue a little longer in the same train, or to abandon the undertaking altogether. Candour obliges me to notify this to my readers, that such of them as have an invincible aversion to abstract speculation, may stop short here; for till principles be unfolded, I can promise no entertainment to those who shun thinking. But I flatter myself with a different bent in the generality of readers: some few, I imagine, will relish the abstract part for its own sake: and many for the useful purposes to which it may be applied. For encouraging the latter to proceed with alacrity, I assure them beforehand, that the foregoing speculation leads to many important rules of criticism, which shall be unfolded in the course of this work. In the mean time, for instant satisfaction in part, they will be pleased to accept the following specimen.



Every work of art that is conformable to the natural course of our ideas, is so far agreeable; and every work of art that reverses that course, is so far disagreeable. Hence it is required in every such work, that; like an organic system, its parts be orderly arranged and mutually connected, bearing each of them a relation to the whole, some more intimate, some less, according to their destination: when due regard is had to these particulars, we have a sense of just composition, and so far are pleased with the performance. Homer is defective in order and connexion; and Pindar more remarkably. Regularity, order, and connexion, are painful restraints on a bold and fertile imagination; and are not patiently submitted to, but after much culture and discipline. In Horace there is no fault more eminent than want of connexion: instances are without number. In the first fourteen lines of ode 7. lib. 1. he mentions several towns and districts, more to the taste of some than of others: in the remainder of the ode, Plancus is exhorted to drown his cares in wine. Having narrowly escaped death by the fall of a tree, this poet\* takes occasion to observe justly, that while we guard against some dangers, we are exposed to others we cannot foresee: he ends with displaying the power of music. The parts of ode 16. lib. 2. are so loosely connected as to disfigure a poem otherwise extremely beautiful. The 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 11th, 24th, 27th odes of the 3d book, lie open all of them to the same censure. The first satire, book 1. is so deformed by want of connexion, as upon the whole to be scarcely agreeable: it commences with an important question, How it happens that people, though much satisfied with them-

\* Lib. ii. ode 13.



selves; are seldom so with their rank or condition. After illustrating the observation in a sprightly manner by several examples, the author, forgetting his subject, enters upon a declamation against avarice, which he pursues till the line 108. There he makes an apology for wandering, and promises to return to his subject; but avarice having got possession of his mind, he follows out that theme to the end, and never returns to the question proposed in the beginning.

Of Virgil's *Georgics*, though esteemed the most complete work of that author, the parts are ill connected, and the transitions far from being sweet and easy. In the first book\* he deviates from his subject to give a description of the five zones: the want of connexion here, as well as in the description of the prodigies that accompanied the death of Cæsar, are scarce pardonable. A digression on the praises of Italy in the second book,† is not more happily introduced: and in the midst of a declamation upon the pleasures of husbandry, which makes part of the same book,‡ the author introduces himself into the poem without the slightest connexion. In the *Lutrin*, the Goddess of Discord is introduced without any connexion: she is of no consequence in the poem; and acts no part, except that of lavishing praise upon Louis XIV. The two prefaces of Sallust look as if by some blunder they had been prefixed to his two histories; they will suit any other history as well, or any subject as well as history. Even the members of these prefaces are but loosely connected: they look more like a number of maxims, or observations, than a connected discourse.

An episode in a narrative poem, being in effect

\* Lin 231.

† Lin. 136.

‡ Lin 475.



an accessory, demands not that strict union with the principal subject, which is requisite between a whole and its constituent parts : it demands, however, a degree of union, such as ought to subsist between a principal and accessory ; and therefore will not be graceful if it be loosely connected with the principal subject. I give for an example the descent of Æneas into hell, which employs the sixth book of the Æneid : the reader is not prepared for that important event : no cause is assigned that can make it appear necessary, or even natural, to suspend for so long a time the principal action in its most interesting period : the poet can find no pretext for an adventure so extraordinary, but the hero's longing to visit the ghost of his father, recently dead : in the mean time the story is interrupted, and the reader loses his ardour. Pity it is that an episode so extremely beautiful, were not more happily introduced. I must observe at the same time, that full justice is done to this incident, by considering it to be an episode ; for if it be a constituent part of the principal action, the connexion ought to be still more intimate. The same objection lies against that elaborate description of Fame in the Æneid : \* any other book of that heroic poem, or of any heroic poem, has as good a title to that description as the book where it is placed.

In a natural landscape, we every day perceive a multitude of objects connected by contiguity solely ; which is not unpleasant, because objects of sight make an impression so lively, as that a relation even of the slightest kind is relished. This, however, ought not to be imitated in description : words are so far short of the eye in liveliness of impres-

\* Lib. iv. lin. 173.



sion, that in a description connexion ought to be carefully studied; for new objects introduced in description are made more or less welcome in proportion to the degree of their connexion with the principal subject. In the following passage, different things are brought together without the slightest connexion, if it be not what may be called verbal, i. e. taking the same word in different meanings.

*Surgamus: solet esse gravis capitantibus umbra.  
Juniperi gravis umbra: nocent et frugibus umbræ.  
Ite domum saturæ, venit Hesperus, ite capellæ.*

*Virg. Buc. x. 75.*

The introduction of an object metaphorically or figuratively, will not justify the introduction of it in its natural appearance: a relation so slight can never be relished;

*Distrust in lovers is too warm a sup;  
But yet 'tis night in love when that is gone.  
And in those climes which most his scorching know,  
He makes the noblest fruits and metals grow.*

*Part 2. Conquest of Grenada, Act III.*

The relations among objects have a considerable influence in the gratification of our passions, and even in their production. But that subject is reserved to be treated in the chapter of emotions and passions.\*

There is not, perhaps, another instance of a building so great erected upon a foundation so slight in appearance, as the relations of objects and their arrangement. Relations make no capital figure in the mind, the bulk of them being transitory, and some extremely trivial: they are, however, the



links that, by uniting our perceptions into one connected chain, produce connexion of action, because perception and action have an intimate correspondence. But it is not sufficient for the conduct of life, that our actions be linked together, however intimately : it is beside necessary that they proceed in a certain order ; and this also is provided for by an original propensity. Thus order and connexion, while they admit sufficient variety, introduce a method in the management of affairs : without them our conduct would be fluctuating and desultory ; and we should be hurried from thought to thought, and from action to action, entirely at the mercy of chance,



## CHAPTER II.

*Emotions and Passions.*

OF all the feelings raised in us by external objects, those only of the eye and the ear are honoured with the name of *passion* or *emotion*: the most pleasing feelings of taste, or touch, or smell, aspire not to that honour. From this observation appears the connexion of emotions and passions with the fine arts, which, as observed in the introduction, are all of them calculated to give pleasure to the eye or the ear; never once condescending to gratify any of the inferior senses. The design accordingly of this chapter is to delineate that connexion, with the view chiefly to ascertain what power the fine arts have to raise emotions and passions. To those who would excel in the fine arts, that branch of knowledge is indispensable; for without it the critic, as well as the undertaker, ignorant of any rule, have nothing left but to abandon themselves to chance. Destitute of that branch of knowledge, in vain will either pretend to foretell what effect his work will have upon the heart.

The principles of the fine arts, appear in this view to open a direct avenue to the heart of man. The inquisitive mind beginning with criticism, the most agreeable of all amusements, and finding no obstruction in its progress, advances far into the sensitive part of our nature; and gains imperceptibly



a thorough knowledge of the human heart, of its desires, and of every motive to action; a science, which of all that can be reached by man, is to him of the greatest importance.

Upon a subject so comprehensive, all that can be expected in this chapter, is a general or slight survey: and to shorten that survey, I propose to handle separately some emotions more peculiarly connected with the fine arts. Even after that circumspection, so much matter comes under the present chapter, that, to avoid confusion, I find it necessary to divide it into many parts: and though the first of these is confined to such causes of emotion or passion as are the most common and the most general; yet upon examination I find this single part so extensive, as to require a subdivision into several sections. Human nature is a complicated machine, and is unavoidably so in order to answer its various purposes. The public indeed have been entertained with many systems of human nature that flatter the mind by their simplicity: according to some writers, man is entirely a selfish being; according to others, universal benevolence is his duty: one founds morality upon sympathy solely, and one upon utility. If any of these systems were copied from nature, the present subject might be soon discussed. But the variety of nature is not so easily reached, and for confuting such Utopian systems without the fatigue of reasoning, it appears the best method to take a survey of human nature, and to set before the eye, plainly and candidly, facts as they really exist.



## PART I.

## CAUSES UNFOLDED OF THE EMOTIONS AND PASSIONS.

SECT. I.—*Difference between Emotion and Passion.—Causes that are the most common and the most general.—Passion considered as productive of Action.*

THESE branches are so interwoven that they cannot be handled separately. It is a fact universally admitted, that no emotion or passion ever starts up in the mind without a cause: if I love a person, it is for good qualities or good offices: if I have resentment against a man, it must be for some injury he has done me: and I cannot pity any one who is under no distress of body nor of mind.

The circumstances now mentioned, if they raise an emotion or passion, cannot be entirely indifferent; for if so, they could not make any impression. And we find, upon examination, that they are not indifferent: looking back upon the foregoing examples, the good qualities or good offices that attract my love, are antecedently agreeable: if an injury did not give uneasiness, it would not occasion resentment against the author: nor would the passion of pity be raised by an object in distress, if that object did not give pain.

What is now said about the production of emotion or passion, resolves into a very simple proposition, That we love what is agreeable, and hate what is disagreeable. And indeed it is evident, that a thing must be agreeable or disagreeable,



before it can be the object either of love or of hatred.

This short hint about the causes of passion and emotion, leads to a more extensive view of the subject. Such is our nature, that upon perceiving certain external objects, we are instantaneously conscious of pleasure or pain: a gently-flowing river, a smooth extended plain, a spreading oak, a towering hill, are objects of sight that raise pleasant emotions: a barren heath, a dirty marsh, a rotten carcass, raise painful emotions. Of the emotions thus produced, we inquire for no other cause but merely the presence of the object.

The things now mentioned, raise emotions by means of their properties and qualities; to the emotion raised by a large river, its size, its force, and its fluency, contributes each a share: the regularity, propriety, and convenience, of a fine building, contribute each to the emotion raised by the building.

If external properties be agreeable, we have reason to expect the same from those which are internal; and, accordingly, power, discernment, wit, mildness, sympathy, courage, benevolence, are agreeable in a high degree: upon perceiving these qualities in others, we instantaneously feel pleasant emotions, without the slightest act of reflection, or of attention to consequences. It is almost unnecessary to add, that certain qualities opposite to the former, such as dulness, peevishness, inhumanity, cowardice, occasion in the same manner painful emotions.

Sensible beings affect us remarkably by their actions. Some actions raise pleasant emotions in the spectator, without the least reflection; such as graceful motion, and genteel behaviour. But as *intention*, a capital circumstance in human actions,



is not visible, it requires reflection to discover their true character: I see one delivering a purse of money to another, but I can make nothing of that action, till I learn with what intention the money is given: if it be given to discharge a debt, the action pleases me in a slight degree; if it be a grateful return, I feel a stronger emotion; and the pleasant emotion rises to a great height, when it is the intention of the giver to relieve a virtuous family from want. Thus actions are qualified by intention: but they are not qualified by the event; for an action well intended gives pleasure, whatever the event be. Further, human actions are perceived to be *right* or *wrong*; and that perception qualifies the pleasure or pain that results from them.\*

Emotions are raised in us, not only by the qualities and actions of others, but also by their feelings: h

\* In tracing our emotions and passions to their origin, my first thought was, that qualities and actions are the primary causes of emotions; and that these emotions are afterwards expended upon the being to which these qualities and actions belong. But I am now convinced that this opinion is erroneous. An attribute is not, even in imagination, separable from the being to which it belongs; and, for that reason, cannot of itself be the cause of any emotion. We have, it is true, no knowledge of any being or substance but by means of its attributes; and, therefore, no being can be agreeable to us otherwise than by their means. But still, when an emotion is raised, it is the being itself, as we apprehend the matter, that raises the emotion; and it raises it by means of one or other of its attributes. If it be urged, That we can in idea abstract a quality from the thing to which it belongs; it might be answered, That such abstraction may serve the purposes of reasoning, but is too faint to produce any sort of emotion. But it is sufficient for the present purpose to answer, That the eye never abstracts; by that organ we perceive things as they really exist, and never perceive a quality as separated from the subject. Hence it must be evident, that emotions are raised, not by qualities abstractly considered, but by the substance or body so and so qualified. Thus, a spreading oak raises a pleasant emotion, by means of its colour, figure, umbrage, &c.: it is not the colour, strictly speaking, that produces the emotion, but the tree coloured: it is not the figure, abstractly considered, that produces the emotion, but the tree of a certain figure. And hence, by the way, it appears, that the beauty of such an object is complex, resolvable into several beauties more simple.



cannot behold a man in distress, without partaking of his pain; nor in joy, without partaking of his pleasure.

The beings or things above described, occasion emotions in us, not only in the original survey, but also when recalled to the memory in idea: a field laid out with taste, is pleasant in the recollection, as well as when under our eye: a generous action described in words or colours, occasions a sensible emotion, as well as when we see it performed; and when we reflect upon the distress of any person, our pain is of the same kind with what we felt when eye-witnesses. In a word, an agreeable or disagreeable object recalled to the mind in idea, is the occasion of a pleasant or painful emotion, of the same kind with that produced when the object was present: the only difference is, that an idea being fainter than an original perception, the pleasure or pain produced by the former, is proportionably fainter than that produced by the latter.

Having explained the nature of an emotion, and mentioned several causes by which it is produced, we proceed to an observation of considerable importance in the science of human nature, which is, That desire follows some emotions, and not others. The emotions raised by a beautiful garden, a magnificent building, or a number of fine faces in a crowded assembly, is seldom accompanied with desire. Other emotions are accompanied with desire; emotions, for example, raised by human actions and qualities: a virtuous action raiseth in every spectator a pleasant emotion, which is commonly attended with desire to reward the author of the action: a vicious action, on the contrary, produceth a painful emotion, attended with desire to punish the delinquent. Even things inanimate



often raise emotions accompanied with desire : witness the goods of fortune; which are objects of desire almost universally; and the desire, when immoderate, obtains the name of *avarice*. The pleasant emotion produced in a spectator by a capital picture in the possession of a prince, is seldom accompanied with desire; but if such a picture be exposed to sale, desire of having or possessing is the natural consequence of a strong emotion.

It is a truth verified by induction, that every passion is accompanied with desire; and if an emotion be sometimes accompanied with desire, sometimes not, it comes to be a material inquiry, in what respect a passion differs from an emotion. Is passion in its nature or feeling distinguishable from emotion? I have been apt to think that there must be such a distinction; but, after the strictest examination, I cannot perceive any : what is love, for example, but a pleasant emotion raised by a sight or idea of the beloved female, joined with the desire of enjoyment? In what else consists the passion of resentment, but in a painful emotion occasioned by the injury, accompanied with desire to chastise the guilty person? In general, as to passion of every kind, we find no more in its composition, but the particulars now mentioned, an emotion pleasant or painful, accompanied with desire. What then shall we say? Are *passion* and *emotion* synonymous terms? That cannot be averred; because no feeling nor agitation of the mind void of desire, is termed a passion; and we have discovered, that there are many emotions which pass away without raising desire of any kind. How is the difficulty to be solved? There appears to me but one solution, which I relish the more, as it renders the doctrine of the passions and emotions simple and perspi-



cuons. The solution follows. An internal motion or agitation of the mind, when it passeth away without desire, is denominated *an emotion*: when desire follows, the motion or agitation is denominated *a passion*. A fine face, for example, raiseth in me a pleasant feeling: if that feeling vanish without producing any effect, it is in proper language an emotion; but if the feeling, by reiterated views of the object, become sufficiently strong to occasion desire, it loses its name of emotion, and acquires that of passion. The same holds in all the other passions: the painful feeling raised in a spectator by a slight injury done to a stranger, being accompanied with no desire of revenge, is termed an emotion: but that injury raiseth in the stranger a stronger emotion, which being accompanied with desire of revenge, is a passion: external expressions of distress produce in the spectator a painful feeling, which being sometimes so slight as to pass away without any effect, is an emotion; but if the feeling be so strong as to prompt desire of affording relief, it is a passion, and is termed *pity*: envy is emulation in excess; if the exaltation of a competitor be barely disagreeable, the painful feeling is an emotion; if it produce desire to depress him, it is a passion.

To prevent mistakes, it must be observed, that desire here is taken in its proper sense, namely, that internal act, which, by influencing the will, makes us proceed to action. Desire in a lax sense respects also actions and events that depend not on us, as when I desire that my friend may have a son to represent him, or that my country may flourish in arts and sciences: but such internal act is more properly termed a *wish* than a *desire*.

Having distinguished passion from emotion, we



proceed to consider passion more at large, with respect especially to its power of producing action.

We have daily and constant experience for our authority, that no man ever proceeds to action but by means of some antecedent desire or impulse. So well established is this observation, and so deeply rooted in the mind, that we can scarce imagine a different system of action: even a child will say familiarly, What should make me do this or that, when I have no desire to do it? Taking it then for granted, that the existence of action depends on antecedent desire; it follows, that where there is no desire, there can be no action. This opens another shining distinction between emotions and passions. The former, being without desire, are in their nature quiescent: the desire included in the latter, prompts one to act in order to fulfil that desire, or, in other words, to gratify the passion.

The cause of a passion is sufficiently explained above: it is that being or thing, which, by raising desire, converts an emotion into a passion. When we consider a passion with respect to its power of prompting action, that same being or thing is termed its *object*: a fine woman, for example, raises the passion of love, which is directed to her as its object: a man, by injuring me, raises my resentment, and becomes thereby the object of my resentment. Thus the cause of a passion, and its object, are the same in different respects. An emotion on the other hand, being in its nature quiescent, and merely a passive feeling, must have a cause; but cannot be said, properly speaking, to have an object.

The objects of our passions may be distinguished into two kinds, general and particular. A man, a house, a garden, is a particular object: fame, esteem, opulence, honour, are general objects, be-



cause each of them comprehends many particulars. The passions directed to general objects are commonly termed *appetites*, in contradistinction to passions directed to particular objects, which retain their proper name: thus we say an appetite for fame, for glory, for conquest, for riches; but we say the passion of friendship, of love, of gratitude, of envy, of resentment. And there is a material difference between appetites and passions, which makes it proper to distinguish them by different names: the latter have no existence till a proper object be presented; whereas the former exist first, and then are directed to an object: a passion comes after its object; an appetite goes before it, which is obvious in the appetites of hunger, thirst, and animal love, and is the same in the other appetites above mentioned.

By an object so powerful as to make a deep impression, the mind is inflamed, and hurried to action with a strong impulse. Where the object is less powerful, so as not to inflame the mind, nothing is felt but desire without any sensible perturbation. The principle of duty affords one instance: the desire generated by an object of duty, being commonly moderate, moves us to act calmly, without any violent impulse; but if the mind happen to be inflamed with the importance of the object, in that case desire of doing our duty becomes a warm passion.

The actions of brute creatures are generally directed by instinct, meaning blind impulse or desire, without any view to consequences. Man is framed to be governed by reason; he commonly acts with deliberation, in order to bring about some desirable end; and in that case his actions are means employed to bring about the end desired: thus I give charity in order to relieve a person from want: I



perform a grateful action as a duty incumbent on me ; and I fight for my country in order to repel its enemies. At the same time, there are human actions that are not governed by reason, nor are done with any view to consequences. Infants, like brutes, are mostly governed by instinct, without the least view to any end, good or ill. And even adult persons act sometimes instinctively: thus one in extreme hunger snatches at food, without the slightest consideration whether it be salutary: avarice prompts to accumulate wealth, without the least view of use; and thereby absurdly converts means into an end: and animal love often hurries to fruition, without a thought even of gratification.

A passion when it flames so high as to impel us to act blindly without any view to consequences, good or ill, may in that state be termed *instinctive*; and when it is so moderate as to admit reason, and to prompt actions with a view to an end, it may in that state be termed *deliberative*.

With respect to actions exerted as means to an end, desire to bring about the end is what determines one to exert the action; and desire considered in that view is termed a *motive*: thus the same mental act that is termed *desire* with respect to an end in view, is termed a *motive* with respect to its power of determining one to act. Instinctive actions have a cause, namely, the impulse of the passion; but they cannot be said to have a motive, because they are not done with any view to consequences.

We learn from experience, that the gratification of desire is pleasant: and the foresight of that pleasure becomes often an additional motive for acting. Thus a child eats by the mere impulse of hunger: a young man thinks of the pleasure of gratification, which being a motive for him to eat, fortifies



the original impulse: and a man farther advanced in life, hath the additional motive, that it will contribute to his health.\*

From these premises, it is easy to determine with accuracy, what passions and actions are selfish, what social. It is the end in view that ascertains the class to which they belong: where the end in view is my own good, they are selfish; where the end in view is the good of another, they are social. Hence it follows, that instinctive actions, where we act blindly and merely by impulse, cannot be reckoned either social or selfish: thus eating, when prompted by an impulse merely of nature, is neither social nor selfish; but add a motive, that it will contribute to my pleasure or my health, and it becomes in a measure selfish. On the other hand, when affection moves me to exert an action to the end solely of advancing my friend's happiness, without regard to my own gratification, the action is justly denominated *social*; and so is also the affection that is its cause: if another motive be added, that gratifying the affection will also contribute to my own happiness, the action becomes partly selfish. If charity be given with the single view of relieving a person from distress, the action is purely social; but if it be partly in view to enjoy the pleasure of a virtuous act, the action is so far selfish.† Animal love when carried into action by natural impulse singly, is neither social nor selfish:

\* One exception there is, and that is remorse, when it is so violent as to make a man desire to punish himself. The gratification here is far from being pleasant. See Part vii. ¶ 9, of this chapter. But a single exception, instead of overturning a general rule, is rather a confirmation of it.

† A selfish motive proceeding from a social principle, such as that mentioned, is the most respectable of all selfish motives. To enjoy the pleasure of a virtuous action, one must be virtuous; and to enjoy the pleasure of a charitable action, one must think charity laudable at least, if not a duty. It is otherwise where a man gives charity merely for the sake of ostentation; for this he may do without having any pity or benevolence in his temper.



when exerted with a view to gratification, it is selfish: when the motive of giving pleasure to its object is superadded, it is partly social, partly selfish. A just action, when prompted by the principle of duty solely, is neither social nor selfish. When I perform an act of justice with a view to the pleasure of gratification, the action is selfish: I pay a debt for my own sake, not with a view to benefit my creditor. But suppose the money has been advanced by a friend without interest, purely to oblige me: in that case, together with the motive of gratification, there arises a motive of gratitude, which respects the creditor solely, and prompts me to act in order to do him good; and the action is partly social, partly selfish. Suppose again I meet with a surprising and unexpected act of generosity, that inspires me with love to my benefactor, and the utmost gratitude: I burn to do him good: he is the sole object of my desire: and my own pleasure in gratifying the desire, vanisheth out of sight: in this case, the action I perform is purely social. Thus it happens, that when a social motive becomes strong, the action is exerted with a view singly to the object of the passion, and self never comes in view. The same effect of stifling selfish motives, is equally remarkable in other passions that are in no view social. An action, for example, done to gratify my ambitious views, is selfish; but if my ambition becomes headstrong, and blindly impels me to action, the action is neither selfish nor social. A slight degree of resentment, where my chief view in acting is the pleasure arising to myself from gratifying the passion, is justly denominated *selfish*: where revenge flames so high as to have no other aim but the destruction of its object,



it is no longer selfish; but, in opposition to a social passion may be termed *dissocial*.\*

When this analysis of human nature is considered, not one article of which can with truth be controverted, there is reason to be surprised at the blindness of some philosophers, who, by dark and confused notions, are led to deny all motives to action but what arise from self-love. Man, for aught appears, might possibly have been so framed, as to be susceptible of no passions but what have self for their object: but man thus framed, would be ill-fitted for society: his constitution, partly selfish, partly social, fits him much better for his present situation.†

Of self, every one hath a direct perception; of other things we have no knowledge but by means of their attributes: and hence it is, that of self the perception is more lively than of any other thing. Self is an agreeable object; and for the reason now given, must be more agreeable than any other object. Is this sufficient to account for the prevalence of self-love?

In the foregoing part of this chapter it is suggested, that some circumstances make beings or things

\* This word, hitherto not in use, seems to fulfil all that is required by Demetrius Phalereus (*Of Elocution*, Sect. 96.) in coining a new word: first, that it be perspicuous; and next, that it be in the tone of the language; that we may not, says our author, introduce among the Grecian vocables, words that sound like those of Phrygia or Scythia.

† As the benevolence of many human actions is beyond the possibility of doubt, the argument commonly insisted on for reconciling such actions to the selfish system, is, that the only motive I can have to perform a benevolent action, or an action of any kind, is the pleasure that it affords me. So much then is yielded, that we are pleased when we do good to others: which is a fair admission of the principle of benevolence; for without that principle, what pleasure could one have in doing good to others? And admitting a principle of benevolence, why may it not be a motive to action, as well as selfishness is, or any other principle?



fit objects for desire, others not. This hint ought to be pursued. It is a truth ascertained by universal experience, that a thing which in our apprehension is beyond reach, never is the object of desire; no man in his right senses, desires to walk on the clouds, or to descend to the centre of the earth: we may amuse ourselves in a reverie, with building castles in the air, and wishing for what can never happen; but such things never move desire. And indeed a desire to do what we are sensible is beyond our power, would be altogether absurd. In the next place, though the difficulty of attainment with respect to things within reach, often inflames desire; yet where the prospect of attainment is faint, and the event extremely uncertain, the object, however agreeable, seldom raiseth any strong desire: thus beauty, or any other good quality, in a woman of rank, seldom raises love in a man greatly her inferior. In the third place, different objects, equally within reach, raise emotions in different degrees; and when desire accompanies any of these emotions, its strength, as is natural, is proportioned to that of its cause. Hence the remarkable difference among desires directed to beings inanimate, animate, and rational: the emotion caused by a rational being, is out of measure stronger than any caused by an animal without reason; and an emotion raised by such an animal, is stronger than what is caused by any thing inanimate. There is a separate reason why desire of which a rational being is the object, should be the strongest: our desires swell by partial gratification; and the means we have of gratifying desire, by benefiting or harming a rational being, are without end: desire directed to an inanimate being, susceptible neither of pleasure nor pain, is not capable of a higher gratification than that of acquiring the property.



Hence it is, that though every emotion accompanied with desire, is, strictly speaking, a passion; yet, commonly, none of these are denominated passions, but where a sensible being, capable of pleasure and pain, is the object.

## SECTION II.

*Power of Sounds to raise Emotions and Passions.*

UPON a review, I find the foregoing section almost wholly employed upon emotions and passions raised by objects of sight, though they are also raised by objects of hearing. As this happened without intention, merely because such objects are familiar above others, I find it proper to add a short section upon the power of sounds to raise emotions and passions.

I begin with comparing sounds and visible objects with respect to their influence upon the mind. It has already been observed, that of all external objects, rational beings, especially of our own species, have the most powerful influence in raising emotions and passions; and, as speech is the most powerful of all the means by which one human being can display itself to another, the objects of the eye must so far yield preference to those of the ear. With respect to inanimate objects of sight, sounds may be so contrived as to raise both terror and mirth beyond what can be done by any such object. Music has a commanding influence over the mind, especially in conjunction with words. Objects of sight may indeed contribute to the same end, but more faintly; as where a love poem is rehearsed in a shady grove, or on the bank of a purling stream. But sounds, which are vastly more ductile and va-



rious, readily accompany all the social affections expressed in a poem, especially emotions of love and pity.

Music, having at command a great variety of emotions, may, like many objects of sight, be made to promote luxury and effeminacy; of which we have instances without number, especially in vocal music. But, with respect to its pure and refined pleasures, music goes hand in hand with gardening and architecture, her sister arts, in humanizing and polishing the mind;\* of which none can doubt who have felt the charms of music. But, if authority be required, the following passage from a grave historian, eminent for solidity of judgment, must have the greatest weight. Polybius, speaking of the people of Cynætha, an Arcadian tribe, has the following train of reflections: "As the Arcadians have always been celebrated for their piety, humanity, and hospitality, we are naturally led to inquire, how it has happened that the Cynætheans are distinguished from the other Arcadians, by savage manners, wickedness, and cruelty. I can attribute this difference to no other cause, but a total neglect among the people of Cynætha, of an institution established among the ancient Arcadians with a nice regard to their manners and their climate: I mean the discipline and exercise of that genuine and perfect music, which is useful in every state, but necessary to the Arcadians; whose manners, originally rigid and austere, made it of the greatest importance to incorporate this art into the very essence of their government. All men know that, in Arcadia, the children are early taught to perform hymns and songs composed in honour of their

\* See Chapter 24.



“ gods and heroes ; and that, when they have  
“ learned the music of Timotheus and Philoxenus,  
“ they assemble yearly in the public theatres,  
“ dancing with emulation to the sound of flutes,  
“ and acting in games adapted to their tender  
“ years. The Arcadians, even in their private  
“ feasts, never employ hirelings, but each man  
“ sings in his turn. They are also taught all the  
“ military steps and motions to the sound of in-  
“ struments, which they perform yearly in the the-  
“ atres, at the public charge. To me it is evident,  
“ that these solemnities were introduced, not for  
“ idle pleasure, but to soften the rough and stub-  
“ born temper of the Arcadians, occasioned by the  
“ coldness of a high country. But the Cynætheans,  
“ neglecting these arts, have become so fierce and  
“ savage, that there is not another city in Greece  
“ so remarkable for frequent and great enormities.  
“ This consideration ought to engage the Arca-  
“ dians never to relax in any degree, their musical  
“ discipline ; and it ought to open the eyes of the  
“ Cynætheans, and make them sensible of what  
“ importance it would be to restore music to their  
“ city, and every discipline that may soften their  
“ manners ; for otherwise they can never hope to  
“ subdue their brutal ferocity.\*

No one will be surprised to hear such influence attributed to music, when, with respect to another of the fine arts, he finds a living instance of an influence no less powerful. It is unhappily indeed the reverse of the former ; for it has done more mischief by corrupting British manners, than music ever did good in purifying those of Arcadia.

The licentious court of Charles II. among its many disorders, engendered a pest, the virulence

\* Polybius, lib. iv. cap. 3.



of which subsists to this day. The English comedy, copying the manners of the court, became abominably licentious; and continues so with very little softening. It is there an established rule, to deck out the chief characters with every vice in fashion, however gross. But, as such characters viewed in a true light would be disgusting, care is taken to disguise their deformity under the embellishments of wit, sprightliness, and good humour, which in mixed company makes a capital figure. It requires not much thought to discover the poisonous influence of such plays. A young man of figure, emancipated at last from the severity and restraint of a college education, repairs to the capital disposed to every sort of excess. The playhouse becomes his favourite amusement; and he is enchanted with the gaiety and splendour of the chief personages. The disgust which vice gives him at first, soon wears off, to make way for new notions, more liberal in his opinion; by which a sovereign contempt for religion, and a declared war upon the chastity of wives, maids, and widows, are converted from being infamous vices to be fashionable virtues. The infection spreads gradually through all ranks, and becomes universal. How gladly would I listen to any one who should undertake to prove, that what I have been describing is chimerical! But the dissoluteness of our young men of birth will not suffer me to doubt of its reality. Sir Harry Wildair has completed many a rake; and in the *Suspicious Husband*, Ranger, the humble imitator of Sir Harry, has had no slight influence in spreading that character. What woman, tinctured with the playhouse morals, would not be the sprightly, the witty, though dissolute Lady Townly, rather than the cold, the sober, though virtuous Lady Grace? How odious ought



writers to be who thus employ the talents they have from their Maker most traitorously against himself, by endeavouring to corrupt and disfigure his creatures! If the comedies of Congreve did not rack him with remorse in his last moments, he must have been lost to all sense of virtue. Nor will it afford any excuse to such writers, that their comedies are entertaining: unless it could be maintained, that wit and sprightliness are better suited to a vicious than a virtuous character. It would grieve me to think so; and the direct contrary is exemplified in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, where we are highly entertained with the conduct of two ladies, not more remarkable for mirth and spirit than for the strictest purity of manners.

## SECTION III.

*Causes of the Emotion of Joy and Sorrow.*

THIS subject was purposely reserved for a separate section, because it could not, with perspicuity, be handled under the general head. An emotion accompanied with desire is termed a *passion*; and when the desire is fulfilled, the *passion* is said to be gratified. Now; the gratification of every passion must be pleasant; for nothing can be more natural, than that the accomplishment of any wish or desire should affect us with joy: I know of no exception but when a man stung with remorse desires to chastise and punish himself. The joy of gratification is properly called an *emotion*; because it makes us happy in our present situation, and is ultimate in its nature, not having a tendency to any thing beyond. On the other hand, sorrow must be the result of an event con-



trary to what we desire; for if the accomplishment of desire produce joy, it is equally natural that disappointment should produce sorrow.

An event, fortunate or unfortunate, that falls out by accident, without being foreseen or thought of, and which therefore could not be the object of desire, raiseth an emotion of the same kind with that now mentioned; but the cause must be different; for there can be no gratification where there is no desire. We have not, however, far to seek for a cause: it is involved in the nature of man, that he cannot be indifferent to an event that concerns him or any of his connexions; if it be fortunate, it gives him joy; if unfortunate, it gives him sorrow.

In no situation doth joy rise to a greater height, than upon the removal of any violent distress of mind or body; and in no situation doth sorrow rise to a greater height, than upon the removal of what makes us happy. The sensibility of our nature serves in part to account for these effects. Other causes concur. One is, that violent distress always raises an anxious desire to be free from it; and therefore its removal is a high gratification: nor can we be possessed of any thing that makes us happy, without wishing its continuance; and therefore its removal, by crossing our wishes, must create sorrow. The principle of contrast is another cause: an emotion of joy arising upon the removal of pain, is increased by contrast when we reflect upon our former distress: an emotion of sorrow, upon being deprived of any good, is increased by contrast when we reflect upon our former happiness:

*Jaſper.* There's not a wretch that lives on common charity,  
But's happier than me. For I have known  
The luscious sweets of plenty: every night



Have slept with soft content about my head,  
And never wak'd but to a joyful morning.  
Yet now must fall like a full ear of corn,  
Whose blossom 'scap'd yet's wither'd in the ripening.

*Venice Preserved, Act I. Sc. 1.*

It hath always been reckoned difficult to account for the extreme pleasure that follows a cessation of bodily pain; as when one is relieved from the rack, or from a violent fit of the stone. What is said explains this difficulty, in the easiest and simplest manner: cessation of bodily pain is not of itself a pleasure, for a *non-ens* or a negative can neither give pleasure nor pain; but man is so framed by nature as to rejoice when he is eased of pain, as well as to be sorrowful when deprived of any enjoyment. This branch of our constitution is chiefly the cause of the pleasure. The gratification of desire comes in as an accessory cause: and contrast joins its force, by increasing the sense of our present happiness. In the case of an acute pain, a peculiar circumstance contributes its part: the brisk circulation of the animal spirits occasioned by acute pain, continues after the pain is gone, and produceth a very pleasant emotion. Sickness hath not that effect, because it is always attended with a depression of spirits.

Hence it is, that the gradual diminution of acute pain, occasions a mixt emotion, partly pleasant, partly painful: the partial diminution produceth joy in proportion; but the remaining pain balanceth the joy. This mixt emotion, however, hath no long endurance; for the joy that ariseth upon the diminution of pain, soon vanisheth, and leaveth in the undisturbed possession that degree of pain which remains.

What is above observed about bodily pain, is equally applicable to the distresses of the mind;



and accordingly it is a common artifice, to prepare us for the reception of good news by alarming our fears.

#### SECTION IV.

#### *Sympathetic Emotion of Virtue, and its cause.*

ONE feeling there is that merits a deliberate view, for its singularity as well as utility. Whether to call it an emotion or a passion, seems uncertain: the former it can scarce be, because it involves desire; the latter it can scarce be, because it has no object. But this feeling, and its nature, will be best understood from examples. A signal act of gratitude produceth in the spectator or reader, not only love or esteem for the author, but also a separate feeling, being a vague feeling of gratitude without an object; a feeling, however, that disposes the spectator or reader to acts of gratitude, more than upon an ordinary occasion. This feeling is overlooked by writers upon ethics; but a man may be convinced of its reality, by attentively watching his own heart when he thinks warmly of any signal act of gratitude: he will be conscious of the feeling, as distinct from the esteem or admiration he has for the grateful person. The feeling is singular in the following respect, that it is accompanied with a desire to perform acts of gratitude, without having any object; though in that state, the mind, wonderfully bent on an object, neglects no opportunity to vent itself: any act of kindness or good-will, that would pass unregarded upon another occasion, is greedily seized; and the vague feeling is converted into a real passion of gratitude: in such a state, favours are returned double.



In like manner, a courageous action produceth in a spectator the passion of admiration directed to the author: and beside his well-known passion, a separate feeling is raised in the spectator; which may be called *an emotion of courage*; because, while under its influence, he is conscious of a boldness and intrepidity beyond what is usual, and longs for proper objects upon which to exert this emotion:

Spumantemque dari, pecora inter inertia, votis  
Opat aprum, aut fulvum descendere monte leonem.

*Ænied, iv. 158.*

Non altramente il tauro, oue l'irriti  
Geloso amor con stimoli pungenti,  
Horribilmente mugge, e co'muggiti  
Gli spirti in se risueglia, e l'ire ardenti:  
E'l corno aguzza a i tronchi, a par ch' iauiti  
Con vani colpi a'la battaglia i venti.

*Tasso, Canto vii. st. 55,*

So full of valour that they smote the air  
For breathing in their faces.

*Tempest, Act IV. Sc. 4.*

The emotions raised by music, independent of words, must be all of this nature: courage roused by martial music performed upon instruments without a voice, cannot be directed to any object; nor can grief or pity raised by melancholy music of the same kind have an object.

For another example, let us figure some grand and heroic action, highly agreeable to the spectator: beside veneration for the author, the spectator feels in himself an unusual dignity of character, which disposeth him to great and noble actions: and herein chiefly consists the extreme delight every one hath in the histories of conquerors and heroes.



This singular feeling, which may be termed *the sympathetic emotion of virtue*, resembles, in one respect, the well-known appetites that lead to the propagation and preservation of the species. The appetites of hunger, thirst, and animal love, arise in the mind before they are directed to any object ; and in no case whatever is the mind more solicitous for a proper object, than when under the influence of any of these appetites.

The feeling I have endeavoured to unfold, may well be termed *the sympathetic emotion of virtue* ; for it is raised in the spectator, or in a reader, by virtuous actions of every kind, and by no other sort. When we contemplate a virtuous action, which fails not to prompt our love for the author, our propensity at the same time to such actions is so much enlivened, as to become for a time an actual emotion. But no man hath a propensity to vice as such : on the contrary, a wicked deed disgusts him, and makes him abhor the author ; and this abhorrence is a strong antidote against vice, as long as any impression remains of the wicked action.

In a rough road, a halt to view a fine country is refreshing ; and here a delightful prospect opens upon us. It is indeed wonderful to observe what incitements there are to virtue in the human frame ; justice is perceived to be our duty ; and it is guarded by natural punishments, from which the guilty never escape ; to perform noble and generous actions, a warm sense of their dignity and superior excellence is a most efficacious incitement,\* And to leave virtue in no quarter unsupported, here is unfolded an admirable contrivance, by which good example commands the heart, and adds to virtue

\* See Essays on Morality and Natural Religion, part I. cts. ii. ch. 4.



the force of habit. We approve every virtuous action, and bestow our affection on the author ; but if virtuous actions produced no other effect upon us, good example would not have great influence : the sympathetic emotion under consideration bestows upon good example the utmost influence, by prompting us to imitate what we admire. This singular emotion will readily find an object to exert itself upon : and at any rate, it never exists without producing some effect : because virtuous emotions of that sort, are in some degree an exercise of virtue ; they are a mental exercise at least, if they appear not externally. And every exercise of virtue, internal and external, leads to habit ; for a disposition or propensity of the mind, like a limb of the body, becomes stronger by exercise. Proper means, at the same time, being ever at hand to raise this sympathetic emotion, its frequent reiteration may, in a good measure, supply the want of a more complete exercise. Thus, by proper discipline, every person may acquire a settled habit of virtue : intercourse with men of worth, histories of generous and disinterested actions, and frequent meditation upon them, keep the sympathetic emotion in constant exercise, which by degrees introduceth a habit, and confirms the authority of virtue : with respect to education in particular, what a spacious and commodious avenue to the heart of a young person is here opened!



## SECTION V.

*In many instances one Emotion is productive of another. The same of Passions.*

IN the first chapter it is observed, that the relations by which things are connected, have a remarkable influence on the train of our ideas. I here add, that they have an influence, no less remarkable, in the production of emotions and passions. Beginning with the former, an agreeable object makes every thing connected with it appear agreeable; for the mind gliding sweetly and easily through related objects, carries along the agreeable properties it meets with in its passage, and bestows them on the present object, which thereby appears more agreeable than when considered apart.\* This reason may appear obscure and metaphysical, but the fact is beyond all dispute. No relation is more intimate than that between a being and its qualities: and, accordingly, every quality in a hero, even the slightest, makes a greater figure than more substantial qualities in others. The propensity of carrying along agreeable properties from

\* Such proneness has the mind to this communication of properties, that we often find a property ascribed to a related object, of which naturally it is not susceptible. Sir Richard Grenville in a single ship, being surprised by the Spanish fleet, was advised to retire. He utterly refused to turn from the enemy; declaring, he would rather die, than dishonour himself, his country, and her Majesty's ship." *Hakluyt*, vol. ii. part. II. p. 169. To aid the communication of properties in instances like the present, there always must be a momentary personification: a ship must be imagined a sensible being, to make it susceptible of honour or dishonour. In the Battle of Mantinea, Epaminondas being mortally wounded, was carried to his tent in a manner dead: recovering his senses, the first thing he inquired about was his shield; which being brought, he kissed it as the companion of his valour and glory. It must be remarked, that among the Greeks and Romans it was deemed infamous for a soldier to return from battle without his shield.



one object to another, is sometimes so vigorous as to convert defects into properties: the wry neck of Alexander was imitated by his courtiers as a real beauty, without intention to flatter: Lady Piercy, speaking of her husband Hotspur,

By his light  
Did all the chivalry of England move,  
To do brave acts. He was indeed the glass,  
Wherein the noble youths did dress themselves.  
He had no legs that practis'd not his gait:  
And speaking thick, which Nature made his blemish,  
Became the accents of the valiant:  
For those who could speak slow and tardily,  
Would turn their own perfection to abuse,  
To seem like him.

*Second Part, Henry IV. Act II. Sc. 2.*

The same communication of passion obtains in the relation of principal and accessory. Pride, of which self is the object, expands itself upon a house, a garden, servants, equipage, and every accessory. A lover addresseth his mistress's glove in the following terms:

Sweet ornament that decks a thing divine.

Veneration for relics has the same natural foundation; and that foundation with the superstructure of superstition, has occasioned much blind devotion to the most ridiculous objects, to the supposed milk, for example, of the Virgin Mary, or the supposed blood of St. Janivarius.\* A temple

\* But why worship the cross which is supposed to be that upon which our Saviour suffered? That cross ought to be the object of hatred, not of veneration. If it be urged, that as an instrument of Christ's suffering it was salutary to mankind, I answer, Why is not also Pontius Pilate revered, Calaphas the high-priest, and Judas Iscariot?



is in a proper sense an accessory of the deity to which it is dedicated: Diana is chaste, and not only her temple, but the very icicle which hangs on it, must partake of that property:

The noble sister of Poplicola,  
The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle  
That's curdled by the frost from purest snow,  
And hangs on Dian's temple.

*Coriolanus, Act. V: Sc. 3.*

Thus it is, that the respect and esteem, which the great, the powerful, the opulent, naturally command, are in some measure communicated to their dress, to their manners, and to all their connexions: and it is this communication of properties, which, prevailing even over the natural taste of beauty, helps to give currency to what is called *the fashion*.

By means of the same easiness of communication, every bad quality in an enemy is spread upon all his connexions. The sentence pronounced against Ravallac for the assassination of Henry IV. of France ordains that the house in which he was born should be razed to the ground, and that no other building should ever be erected on that spot. Enmity will extend passion to objects still less connected. The Swiss suffer no peacocks to live, because the Duke of Austria, their ancient enemy, wears a peacock's tail in his crest. A relation more slight and transitory than that of enmity, may have the same effect: thus the bearer of bad tidings becomes an object of aversion:

Fellow, begone; I cannot brook thy sight;  
This news hath made thee a most ugly man.

*King John, Act III. Sc. 1.*



Yet the first bringer of unwelcome news  
Hath but a losing office: and his tongue  
Sounds ever after, as a sullen bell  
Remember'd tolling a departed friend.

*Second Part, Henry IV. Act I. Sc. 3.*

In borrowing thus properties from one object to bestow them on another, it is not any object indifferently that will answer. The object from which properties are borrowed, must be such as to warm the mind and enliven the imagination. Thus the beauty of a mistress, which enflames the imagination, is readily communicated to a glove, as above mentioned; but the greatest beauty a glove is susceptible of, touches the mind so little, as to be entirely dropped in passing from it to the owner. In general, it may be observed, that any dress upon a fine woman is becoming; but that ornaments upon one who is homely, must be elegant indeed to have any remarkable effect in mending her appearance.\*

The emotions produced as above may properly be termed *secondary*, being occasioned either by antecedent emotions or antecedent passions which in that respect may be termed *primary*. And to complete the present theory, I must add, that a secondary emotion may readily swell into a passion for the accessory object, provided the accessory be a proper object for desire. Thus it happens that one passion is often productive of another: examples are without number; the sole difficulty is a proper choice. I begin with self-love, and the power it

\* A house and gardens surrounded with pleasant fields, all in good order, bestow greater lustre upon the owner than at first will be imagined. The beauties of the former are, by intimacy of connexion, readily communicated to the latter; and if it have been done at the expense of the owner himself, we naturally transfer to him whatever of design, art, or taste, appears in the performance. Should not this be a strong motive with proprietors to embellish and improve their fields?



hath to generate love to children. Every man, beside making part of a greater system, like a comet, a planet, or satellite only, hath a less system of his own, in the centre of which he represents the sun darting his fire and heat all around; especially upon his nearest connexions: the connexion between a man and his children, fundamentally that of cause and effect, becomes, by the addition of other circumstances, the completest that can be among individuals; and therefore self-love, the most vigorous of all passions, is readily expanded upon children. The secondary emotion they produce by means of their connexion, is sufficiently strong to move desire even from the beginning; and the new passion swells by degrees, till it rival in some measure self-love, the primary passion. To demonstrate the truth of this theory, I urge the following argument. Remorse for betraying a friend, or murdering an enemy in cold blood, makes a man even hate himself: in that state, he is not conscious of affection to his children, but rather of disgust or ill-will. What cause can be assigned for that change, other than the hatred he has to himself, which is expanded upon his children. And if so, may we not with equal reason derive from self-love, some part at least of the affection a man generally has to them?

The affection a man bears to his blood relations, depends partly on the same principle: self-love is also expanded upon them; and the communicated passion is more or less vigorous in proportion to the degree of connexion. Nor doth self-love rest here: it is, by the force of connexion, communicated even to things inanimate: and hence the affection a man bears to his property, and to every thing he calls his own.



Friendship, less vigorous than self-love, is, for that reason, less apt to communicate itself to the friend's children, or other relations. Instances, however, are not wanting of such communicated passion, arising from friendship when it is strong. Friendship may go higher in the matrimonial state than in any other condition; and Otway, in *Venice Preserved*, takes advantage of that circumstance: in the scene where Belvidera sues to her father for pardon, she is represented as pleading her mother's merits, and the resemblance she bore to her mother:

*Pruli.* My daughter!

*Belvidera.* Yes, your daughter, by a mother  
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour;  
Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,  
Dear to your arms. By all the joys she gave you  
When in her blooming years she was your treasure,  
Look kindly on me; in my face behold  
The lineaments of her's y' have kissed so often,  
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.

And again,

*Belvidera.* Lay me, I beg you, lay me  
By the dear ashes of my tender mother:  
She would have pitied me, had fate yet spar'd her.

*Act V. Sc. 1.*

This explains why any meritorious action, or any illustrious qualification, in my son or my friend, is apt to make me over-value myself: if I value my friend's wife or son upon account of their connexion with him, it is still more natural that I should value myself upon account of my connexion with him.

Friendship, or any other social affection, may, by changing the object, produce opposite effects.



Pity, by interesting us strongly for the person in distress, must of consequence inflame our resentment against the author of the distress: for, in general, the affection we have for any man, generates in us good-will to his friends, and ill-will to his enemies. Shakspeare shows great art in the funeral oration pronounced by Antony over the body of Cæsar. He first endeavours to excite grief in the hearers, by dwelling upon the deplorable loss of so great a man: this passion, interesting them strongly in Cæsar's fate, could not fail to produce a lively sense of the treachery and cruelty of the conspirators; an infallible method to inflame the resentment of the people beyond all bounds:

*Antony.* If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.  
You all do know this mantle. I remember  
The first time ever Cæsar put it on;  
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent,  
That day he overcame the Nervii——  
Look! in this place ran Cassius's dagger through;——  
See what a rent the envious Casca made.  
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd;  
And, as he pluck'd his cursed steel away,  
Mark how the blood of Cæsar follow'd it!  
As rushing out of doors, to be resolv'd,  
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd or no:  
For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel.  
Judge, oh you Gods! how dearly Cæsar lov'd him!  
This, this, was the unkindest cut of all;  
For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,  
Ingratitude, more strong than traitor's arms,  
Quite vanquish'd him; then burst his mighty heart;  
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,  
Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell,  
Even at the base of Pompey's statue.  
O what a fall was there, my countrymen!  
Then I and you, and all of us, fell down,  
Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.  
O, now you weep; and I perceive you feel  
The dint of pity; these are gracious drops.  
Kind souls! what! weep you when you but behold



Our Cæsar's vesture wounded? look you here!  
Here is himself, marr'd as you see, by traitors.

*Julius Cæsar, Act III. Sc. 6.*

Had Antony endeavoured to excite his audience to vengeance, without paving the way by raising their grief, his speech would not have made the same impression.

Hatred, and other dissocial passions, produce effects directly opposite to those above mentioned. If I hate a man, his children, his relations, nay his property, become to me objects of aversion: his enemies, on the other hand, I am disposed to esteem.

The more slight and transitory relations are not favourable to the communication of passion. Anger, when sudden and violent, is one exception; for, if the person who did the injury be removed out of reach, that passion will vent itself against any related object, however slight the relation be. Another exception makes a greater figure: a group of beings or, things, becomes often the object of a communicated passion, even where the relation of the individuals to the percipient is but slight. Thus, though I put no value upon a single man for living in the same town with myself; my townsmen, however, considered in a body, are preferred before others. This is still more remarkable with respect to my countrymen in general: the grandeur of the complex objects swells the passion of self-love by the relation I have to my native country; and every passion, when it swells beyond its ordinary bounds, hath a peculiar tendency to expand itself along related objects. In fact, instances are not rare, of persons, who upon all occasions are willing to sacrifice their lives and fortunes for their country. Such influence upon the mind of man



hath a complex object, or, more properly speaking, a general term.\*

The sense of order hath influence in the communication of passion. It is a common observation, that a man's affection to his parents is less vigorous than to his children: the order of nature in descending to children, aids the transition of the affection: the ascent to a parent, contrary to that order, makes the transition more difficult. Gratitude to a benefactor is readily extended to his children; but not so readily to his parents. The difference, however, between the natural and inverted order, is not so considerable, but that it may be balanced by other circumstances. Pliny† gives an account of a woman of rank condemned to die for a crime; and, to avoid public shame, detained in prison to die of hunger, her life being prolonged beyond expectation, it was discovered that she was nourished by sucking milk from the breasts of her daughter. This instance of filial piety, which aided the transition, and made ascent no less easy than descent is commonly, procured a pardon to the mother, and a pension to both. The story of Androcles and the lion‡ may be accounted for in the same manner: the admiration, of which the lion was the object, for his kindness and gratitude to Androcles, produced good-will to Androcles, and a pardon of his crime.

And this leads to other observations upon communicated passions. I love my daughter less after she is married, and my mother less after a second marriage: the marriage of my son or of my father diminishes not my affection so remarkably. The

\* See *Essays on morality and natural religion*, part I. *ess. ii. ch. 5.*

† *Lib. vii. cap. 36.*

‡ *Aulus Gellius, lib. v. cap. 14.*



same observation holds with respect to friendship, gratitude and other passions: the love I bear my friend, is but faintly extended to his married daughter: the resentment I have against a man is readily extended against children who make part of his family; not so readily against children who are foris-familiated, especially by marriage. This difference is also more remarkable in daughters than in sons. These are curious facts; and, in order to discover the cause, we must examine minutely that operation of the mind by which a passion is extended to a related object. In considering two things as related, the mind is not stationary, but passeth and repasseth from the one to the other, viewing the relation from each of them perhaps oftener than once; which holds more especially in considering a relation between things of unequal rank, as between the cause and the effect, or between a principal and an accessory: in contemplating, for example, the relation between a building and its ornaments, the mind is not satisfied with a single transition from the former to the latter; it must also view the relation, beginning at the latter, and passing from it to the former. This vibration of the mind in passing and repassing between things related, explains the facts above mentioned: the mind passeth easily from the father to the daughter: but where the daughter is married, this new relation attracts the mind, and obstructs, in some measure, the return from the daughter to the father; and any circumstance that obstructs the mind in passing and repassing between its objects, occasions a like obstruction in the communication of passion. The marriage of a male obstructs less the easiness of transition; because a male is less sunk by the relation of marriage than a female.



The foregoing instances are of passion communicated from one object to another. But one passion may be generated by another, without change of object. It in general is observable, that a passion paves the way to others similar in their tone, whether directed to the same or to a different object; for the mind, heated by any passion, is, in that state, more susceptible of a new impression in a similar tone, than when cool and quiescent. It is a common observation, that pity generally produceth friendship for a person in distress. One reason is, that pity interests us in its object, and recommends all its virtuous qualities: female beauty accordingly shows best in distress; being more apt to inspire love, than upon an ordinary occasion. But the chief reason is, that pity, warming and melting the spectator, prepares him for the reception of other tender affections; and pity is readily improved into love or friendship, by a certain tenderness and concern for the object, which is the tone of both passions. The aptitude of pity to produce love, is beautifully illustrated by Shakespeare:

*Othello.* Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;  
 Still question'd me the story of my life,  
 From year to year; the battles, sieges, fortunes,  
 That I had past.  
 I ran it through, ev'n from my boyish days,  
 To th' very moment that he badè me tell it:  
 Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,  
 Of moving accidents by flood and field;  
 Of hair-breadth 'scapes in th' imminent deadly breach;  
 Of being taken by the insolent foe,  
 And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,  
 And with it all my travel's history.  
 ————— All these to hear  
 Would Desdemona seriously incline;  
 But still the house-affairs would draw her thence,  
 Which ever as she could with haste despatch,



She'd come again, and with a greedy ear  
Devour up my discourse : which I observing,  
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means  
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heard,  
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,  
Whereof by parcels she had something heart,  
But not distinctively. I did consent,  
And often did beguile her of her tears,  
When I did speak of some distressful stroke  
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,  
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs :  
She swore, in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange—  
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful—  
She wish'd she had not heard it:—yet she wish'd  
That Heaven had made her such a man:—she thank'd me,  
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,  
I should but teach him how to tell my story,  
And that would woo her. On this hint I spake :  
She lov'd me for the dangers I had past,  
And I lov'd her, that she did pity them :  
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd.

*Othello, Act I. Sc. 8.*

In this instance it will be observed that admiration concurred with pity to produce love.

#### SECTION VI.

##### *Causes of the Passions of Fear and Anger.*

FEAR and anger, to answer the purposes of nature, are happily so contrived as to operate sometimes instinctively, sometimes deliberately, according to circumstances. As far as deliberate, they fall in with the general system, and require no particular explanation : if any object have a threatening appearance, reason suggests means to avoid the danger : if a man be injured, the first thing he thinks of, is what revenge he shall take, and what means he shall employ. These particulars are no



less obvious than natural. But, as the passions of fear and anger, in their instinctive state, are less familiar to us, it may be acceptable to the reader to have them accurately delineated. He may also possibly be glad of an opportunity to have the nature of instinctive passions more fully explained, than there was formerly opportunity to do. I begin with fear.

Self-preservation is a matter of too great importance to be left entirely to the conduct of reason. Nature hath acted here with her usual foresight. Fear and anger are passions that move us to act, sometimes deliberately, sometimes instinctively, according to circumstances; and by operating in the latter manner, they frequently afford security when the slower operations of deliberate reason would be too late: we take nourishment commonly, not by the direction of reason, but by the impulse of hunger and thirst; and, in the same manner, we avoid danger by the impulse of fear, which often, before there is time for reflection, placeth us in safety. Here we have an illustrious instance of wisdom in the formation of man; for it is not within the reach of fancy, to conceive any thing more artfully contrived to answer its purpose, than the instinctive passion of fear, which upon the first surmise of danger, operates instantaneously. So little doth the passion, in such instances, depend on reason, that it frequently operates in contradiction to it: a man who is not upon his guard cannot avoid shrinking at a blow, though he knows it to be aimed in sport; nor avoid closing his eyes at the approach of what may hurt them, though conscious that he is in no danger. And it also operates by impelling us to act even where we are conscious that our interposition can be of no service: if a passage boat in a brisk gale, bear much to one side, I can-



not avoid applying the whole force of my shoulders to set it upright; and, if my horse stumble, my hands and knees are instantly at work to prevent him from falling.

Fear provides for self-preservation by flying from harm; anger, by repelling it. Nothing, indeed, can be better contrived to repel or prevent injury, than anger or resentment: destitute of that passion, men, like defenceless lambs, would lie constantly open to mischief.\* Deliberate anger caused by a voluntary injury, is too well known to require any explanation: if my desire be to resent an affront, I must use means; and these means must be discovered by reflection: deliberation is here requisite; and in that case the passion seldom exceeds just bounds. But, where anger impels one suddenly to return a blow, even without thinking of doing mischief, the passion is instinctive; and it is chiefly in such a case that it is rash and ungovernable, because it operates blindly, without affording time for deliberation or foresight.

Instinctive anger is frequently raised by bodily pain, by a stroke, for example, on a tender part, which, ruffling the temper, and unhinging the mind, is in its tone similar to anger: and when a man is thus beforehand disposed to anger, he is not nice nor scrupulous about an object; the person who gave the stroke, however accidentally, is by an inflammable temper held a proper object, merely for having occasioned the pain. It is still more remarkable, that a stock or a stone by which I am hurt, becomes an object of my resentment: I am violently excited to crush it to atoms. The pas-

\* Brasidas being bit by a mouse he had caught, let it slip out of his fingers: "No creature, (says he,) is so contemptible, but what may provide for its own safety, if it have courage."

*Plutarch, Apophthegmata.*



sion, indeed, in that case, can be but a single flash; for being entirely irrational, it must vanish with the first reflection. Nor is that irrational effect confined to bodily pain: internal distress, when excessive, may be the occasion of effects equally irrational: perturbation of mind occasioned by the apprehension of having lost a dear friend, will, in a fiery temper, produce momentary sparks of anger against that very friend, however innocent: thus Shakspeare, in the *Tempest*,

*Alonzo.* ————— Sit down and rest.

Even here I will put off my hope, and keep it  
No longer for my flatterer; he is drown'd  
Whom thus we stray to find, and the sea mocks  
Our frustrate search on land. Well, let him go.

*Act III. Sc. 3.*

The final words, *Well, let him go*, are an expression of impatience and anger at Ferdinand, whose absence greatly distressed his father, dreading that he was lost in the storm. This nice operation of the human mind, is by Shakspeare exhibited upon another occasion, and finely painted in the tragedy of *Othello*: Iago, by dark hints and suspicious circumstances, had roused Othello's jealousy; which, however, appeared too slightly founded to be vented upon Desdemona, its proper object. The perturbation and distress of mind thereby occasioned, produced a momentary resentment against Iago, considered as occasioning the jealousy, though innocent;

*Othello.* Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore;  
Be sure of it: give me the ocular proof,  
Or by the wrath of man's eternal soul  
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,  
Than answer my wak'd wrath.

*Iago.* Is't come to this?



*Othello.* Make me see't; or, at the least, so prove it,  
That the probation bear no hinge or loop  
To hang a doubt on: or wo upon thy life!

*Iago.* My noble lord——

*Othello.* If thou dost slander her, and torture me,  
Never pray more; abandon all remorse;  
On horror's head horrors accumulate;  
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed;  
For nothing canst thou to damnation add  
Greater than that.

*Othello, Act II. Sc. 8.*

This blind and absurd effect of anger is more gaily illustrated by Addison, in a story, the *dramatis personæ* of which are, a cardinal, and a spy retained in pay for intelligence. The cardinal is represented as minuting down the particulars. The spy begins with a low voice, "Such an one the advocate whispered to one of his friends within my hearing, that your Eminence was a very great poltroon;" and after having given his patron time to take it down, adds, "That another called him a mercenary rascal in a public conversation." The cardinal replies, "Very well," and bids him go on. The spy proceeds, and loads him with reports of the same nature, till the cardinal rises in a fury, calls him an impudent scoundrel, and kicks him out of the room.\*

We meet with instances every day of resentment raised by loss at play, and wreaked on the cards or dice. But anger, a furious passion, is satisfied with a connexion still slighter than that of cause and effect; of which Congreve, in the *Mourning Bride*, gives one beautiful example.

*Gonsalez.* Have comfort.

*Almeira.* Curs'd be that tongue that bids me be of comfort.  
Curs'd my own tongue that could not move his pity



Curs'd these weak hands that could not hold him here,  
For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

*Act IV. Sc. 8.*

I have chosen to exhibit anger in its more rare appearances, for in these we can best trace its nature and extent. In the examples above given, it appears to be an absurd passion, and altogether irrational. But we ought to consider, that it is not the intention of nature to subject this passion, in every instance, to reason and reflection: it was given us to prevent or to repel injuries; and, like fear, it often operates blindly and instinctively, without the least view to consequences: the very first apprehension of harm, sets it in motion to repel injury by punishment. Were it more cool and deliberate, it would lose its threatening appearance, and be insufficient to guard us against violence. When such is and ought to be the nature of the passion, it is not wonderful to find it exerted irregularly and capriciously, as it sometimes is where the mischief is sudden and unforeseen. All the harm that can be done by the passion in that state is instantaneous; for the shortest delay sets all to rights; and circumstances are seldom so unlucky as to put it in the power of a passionate man to do much harm in an instant.

Social passions, like the selfish, sometimes drop their character and become instinctive. It is not unusual to find anger and fear respecting others so excessive, as to operate blindly and impetuously, precisely as where they are selfish.



## SECTION VII.

*Emotions caused by Fiction.*

THE attentive reader will observe, that hitherto no fiction hath been assigned as the cause of any passion or emotion : whether it be a being, action, or quality, that moveth us, it is supposed to be really existing. This observation shows that we have not yet completed our task ; because passions, as all the world know, are moved by fiction as well as by truth. In judging beforehand of man, so remarkably addicted to truth and reality, one should little dream that fiction can have any effect upon him ; but man's intellectual faculties are not sufficiently perfect to dive far even into his own nature. I shall take occasion afterward to show, that the power of fiction to generate passion is an admirable contrivance, subservient to excellent purposes : in the mean time, we must try to unfold the means that give fiction such influence over the mind.

That the objects of our external senses really exist in the way and manner we perceive, is a branch of intuitive knowledge : when I see a man walking, a tree growing, or cattle grazing, I cannot doubt but that these objects are really what they appear to be : if I be a spectator of any transaction or event, I have a conviction of the real existence of the persons engaged, of their words, and of their actions. Nature determines us to rely on the veracity of our senses ; for otherwise they could not in any degree answer their end, that of laying open things existing and passing around us.



By the power of memory, a thing formerly seen may be recalled to the mind with different degrees of accuracy. We commonly are satisfied with a slight recollection of the capital circumstances; and, in such recollection, the thing is not figured as in our view, nor any image formed: we retain the consciousness of our present situation, and barely remember that formerly we saw that thing. But with respect to an interesting object or event that made a strong impression, I am not satisfied with a cursory review, but must dwell upon every circumstance. I am imperceptibly converted into a spectator, and perceive every particular passing in my presence, as when I was in reality a spectator. For example, I saw yesterday a beautiful woman in tears for the loss of an only child, and was greatly moved with her distress: not satisfied with a slight recollection or bare remembrance, I ponder upon the melancholy scene: conceiving myself to be in the place where I was an eye-witness, every circumstance appears to me as at first: I think I see the woman in tears, and hear her moans. Hence it may be justly said, that in a complete idea of memory there is no past nor future: a thing recalled to the mind with the accuracy I have been describing, is perceived as in our view, and consequently as existing at present. Past time makes part of an incomplete idea only: I remember or reflect, that some years ago I was at Oxford, and saw the first stone laid of the Ratcliff library; and I remember that, at a still greater distance of time, I heard a debate in the House of Commons about a standing army.

Lamentable is the imperfection of language, almost in every particular that falls not under external sense. I am talking of a matter exceedingly clear in the perception: and yet I find no small



difficulty to express it clearly in words ; for it is not accurate to talk of incidents long past as passing in our sight, nor of hearing at present what we really heard yesterday, or at a more distant time. And yet the want of proper words to describe ideal presence, and to distinguish it from real presence, makes this inaccuracy unavoidable. When I recal any thing to my mind in a manner so distinct as to form an idea or image of it as present, I have not words to describe that act, but that I perceive the thing as a spectator, and as existing in my presence ; which means not that I am really a spectator, but only that I conceive myself to be a spectator, and have a perception of the object similar to what a real spectator hath.

As many rules of criticism depend on ideal presence, the reader, it is hoped, will take some pains to form an exact notion of it, as distinguished on the one hand from real presence, and on the other from a superficial or reflective remembrance. In contradistinction to real presence, ideal presence may properly be termed a *waking dream* ; because, like a dream, it vanisheth the moment we reflect upon our present situation : real presence, on the contrary, vouched by eye-sight, commands our belief, not only during the direct perception, but in reflecting afterward on the object. To distinguish ideal presence from reflective remembrance, I give the following illustration : when I think of an event as past, without forming any image, it is barely reflecting or remembering that I was an eye-witness ; but when I recal the event so distinctly as to form a complete image of it, I perceive it as passing in my presence ; and this perception is an act of intuition, into which reflection enters not, more than into an act of sight.



Though ideal presence is thus distinguished from real presence on the one side, and from reflective remembrance on the other, it is however variable without any precise limits; rising sometimes toward the former, and often sinking toward the latter. In a vigorous exertion of memory, ideal presence is extremely distinct: thus, when a man, entirely occupied with some event that made a deep impression, forgets himself, he perceives every thing as passing before him, and hath a consciousness of presence similar to that of a spectator; with no difference but that in the former the perception of presence is less firm and clear than in the latter. But such vigorous exertion of memory is rare: ideal presence is oftener faint, and the image so obscure as not to differ widely from reflective remembrance.

Hitherto of an idea of memory. I proceed to consider the idea of a thing I never saw, raised in me by speech, by writing, or by painting. That idea, with respect to the present subject, is of the same nature with an idea of memory, being either complete or incomplete. A lively and accurate description of an important event, raises in me ideas no less distinct than if I had been originally an eye-witness: I am insensibly transformed into a spectator; and have an impression that every incident is passing in my presence. On the other hand, a slight or superficial narrative produceth but a faint and incomplete idea, of which ideal presence makes no part. Past time is a circumstance that enters into this idea, as it doth into an incomplete idea of memory: I believe that Scipio existed about 2000 years ago, and that he overcame Hannibal in the famous battle of Zama. When I reflect so slightly upon that memorable event, I consider it as long past. But let it be spread out in a



lively and beautiful description, I am insensibly transformed into a spectator: I perceive these two heroes in act to engage: I perceive them brandishing their swords, and cheering their troops; and in that manner I attend them through the battle, every incident of which appears to be passing in my sight.

I have had occasion to observe,\* that ideas, both of memory and of speech, produce emotions of the same kind with what are produced by an immediate view of the object; only fainter, in proportion as an idea is fainter than an original perception. The insight we have now got, unfolds that mystery: ideal presence supplies the want of real presence; and in idea we perceive persons acting and suffering, precisely as an original survey: if our sympathy be engaged by the latter, it must also in some degree be engaged by the former, especially if the distinctness of ideal presence approach to that of real presence. Hence the pleasure of a reverie, where a man, forgetting himself, is totally occupied with the ideas passing in his mind, the objects of which he conceives to be really existing in his presence. The power of language to raise emotions, depends entirely on the raising such lively and distinct images as are here described: the reader's passions are never sensibly moved, till he be thrown into a kind of reverie; in which state, forgetting that he is reading, he conceives every incident as passing in his presence, precisely as if he were an eyewitness. A general or reflective remembrance cannot warm us into any emotion: it may be agreeable in some slight degree; but its ideas are too faint and obscure to raise any thing like an emotion: and were they ever so lively, they pass with too

\* Part I. sect. 1. of the present chapter.



much precipitation to have that effect: our emotions are never instantaneous; even such as come the soonest to their height, have different periods of birth and increment; and to give opportunity for these different periods, it is necessary that the cause of every emotion be present to the mind a due time; for an emotion is not carried to its height but by reiterated impressions. We know that to be the case of emotions arising from objects of sight; a quick succession, even of the most beautiful objects, scarce making any impression; and if this hold in the succession of original perceptions, how much more in the succession of ideas?

Though all this while I have been only describing what passeth in the mind of every one, and what every one must be conscious of, it was necessary to enlarge upon the subject; because, however clear in the internal conception, it is far from being so when described in words. Ideal presence, though of general importance, hath scarce ever been touched by any writer; and however difficult the explication, it could not be avoided in accounting for the effects produced by fiction. Upon that point, the reader I guess, has prevented me: it already must have occurred to him, that if, in reading, ideal presence be the means by which our passions are moved, it makes no difference whether the subject be a fable or a true history: when ideal presence is complete, we perceive every object as in our sight; and the mind, totally occupied with an interesting event, finds no leisure for reflection. This reasoning is confirmed by constant and universal experience. Let us take under consideration the meeting of Hector and Andromache, in the sixth book of the Iliad, or some of the passionate scenes in King Lear: these pictures of human life, when we are sufficiently engaged, give an impression of



reality not less distinct than that given by Tacitus describing the death of Otho: we never once reflect whether the story be true or feigned; reflection comes afterward, when we have the scene no longer before our eyes. This reasoning will appear in a still clearer light, by opposing ideal presence to ideas raised by a cursory narrative; which ideas being faint, obscure, and imperfect, leave a vacuity in the mind, which solicits reflection. And accordingly, a curt narrative of feigned incidents is never relished: any slight pleasure it affords, is more than counterbalanced by the disgust it inspires for want of truth.

To support the foregoing theory, I add what I reckon a decisive argument; which is, that even genuine history has no command over our passions but by ideal presence only; and consequently, that in this respect it stands upon the same footing with fable. To me it appears clear, that in neither can our sympathy hold firm against reflection: for if the reflection that a story is a pure fiction prevent our sympathy, so will equally the reflection that the persons described are no longer existing. What effect, for example, can the belief of the rape of Lucretia have to raise our sympathy, when she died above 2000 years ago, and hath at present no painful feeling of the injury done her? The effect of history, in point of instruction, depends in some measure upon its veracity. But history cannot reach the heart, while we indulge any reflection upon the facts: such reflection, if it engage our belief, never fails at the same time to poison our pleasure, by convincing us that our sympathy for those who are dead and gone is absurd. And if reflection be laid aside, history stands upon the same footing with fable: what effect either may have to raise our sympathy, depends on the vivacity of the



ideas they raise ; and, with respect to that circumstance, fable is generally more successful than history.

Of all the means for making an impression of ideal presence, theatrical representation is the most powerful. That words, independent of action, have the same power in a less degree, every one of sensibility must have felt : a good tragedy will extort tears in private, though not so forcibly as upon the stage. That power belongs also to painting : a good historical picture makes a deeper impression than words can, though not equal to that of theatrical action. Painting seems to possess a middle place between reading and acting : in making an impression of ideal presence, it is not less superior to the former than inferior to the latter.

It must not however be thought, that our passions can be raised by painting, to such a height as by words : a picture is confined to a single instant of time, and cannot take in a succession of incidents : its impression indeed is the deepest that can be made instantaneously ; but seldom is a passion raised to any height in an instant, or by a single impression : it was observed above, that our passions, those especially of the sympathetic kind, require a succession of impressions ; and for that reason, reading and acting have greatly the advantage, by reiterating impressions without end.

Upon the whole, it is by means of ideal presence that our passions are excited ; and till words produce that charm, they avail nothing : even real events entitled to our belief, must be conceived present and passing in our sight, before they can move us. And this theory serves to explain several phenomena otherwise unaccountable. A misfortune happening to a stranger, makes a less impression than happening to a man we know, even



where we are no way interested in him : our acquaintance with this man, however slight, aids the conception of his suffering in our presence. For the same reason, we are little moved by any distant event ; because we have more difficulty to conceive it present, than an event that happened in our neighbourhood.

Every one is sensible, that describing a past event as present, has a fine effect in language : for what other reason than that it aids the conception of ideal presence ? Take the following example.

And now with shouts the shocking armies clos'd,  
To lances lances, shields to shields oppos'd ;  
Host against host the shadowy legions drew,  
The sounding darts, an iron tempest, flew ;  
Victors and vanquish'd join promiscuous cries,  
Triumphing shouts and dying groans arise,  
With streaming blood the slippery field is dy'd,  
And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide.

In this passage we may observe how the writer, inflamed with the subject, insensibly advances from the past time to the present ; led to that form of narration by conceiving every circumstance as passing in his own sight : which at the same time has a fine effect upon the reader, by presenting things to him as a spectator. But change from the past to the present requires some preparation ; and is not sweet where there is no stop in the sense : witness the following passage.

Thy fate was next, O Phæstus ! doom'd to feel  
The great Idomeneus' protended steel ;  
Whom Borus sent (his son and only joy)  
From fruitful Tarne to the fields of Troy.  
The Cretan jav'lin reach'd him from afar,  
And pierc'd his shoulder as he mounts his car.

*Iliad, v. 57.*



It is still worse to fall back to the past in the same period ; for that is an anticlimax in description :

Through breaking ranks his furious course he bends,  
And at the goddess his broad lance extends :  
Through her bright veil the daring weapon drove,  
Th' ambrosial veil, which all the graces wove :  
Her snowy hand the razing steel profan'd,  
And the transparent skin with crimson stain'd.

*Iliad*, v. 415.

Again, describing the shield of Jupiter,

Here all the Terrors of grim war appear,  
Here rages Force, here tremble Flight and Fear,  
Here storm'd Contention, and here Fury frown'd,  
And the dire orb portentous Gorgon crown'd.

*Iliad*, v. 914.

Nor is it pleasant to be carried backward and forward alternately in a rapid succession :

Then dy'd Scamandrius, expert in the chace,  
In woods and wilds to wound the savage race ;  
Diana taught him all her sylvan arts,  
To bend the bow and aim unerring darts :  
But vainly here Diana's arts he tries,  
The fatal lance arrests him as he flies ;  
From Menelaus' arm the weapon sent,  
Through his broad back and heaving bosom went :  
Down sinks the warrior with a thund'ring sound,  
His brazen armour rings against the ground.

*Iliad*, v. 65.

It is wonderful to observe, upon what slight foundations Nature erects some of her most solid and magnificent works. In appearance at least, what can be more slight than ideal presence ? And yet from it is derived that extensive influence which language hath over the heart ; an influence which, more than any other means, strengthens the bond



of society, and attracts individuals from their private system to perform acts of generosity and benevolence. Matters of fact, it is true, and truth in general, may be inculcated without taking advantage of ideal presence; but without it, the finest speaker or writer would in vain attempt to move any passion: our sympathy would be confined to objects that are really present; and language would lose entirely its signal power of making us sympathise with beings removed at the greatest distance of time as well as of place. Nor is the influence of language, by means of ideal presence, confined to the heart: it reacheth also the understanding, and contributes to belief. For when events are related in a lively manner, and every circumstance appears as passing before us, we suffer not patiently the truth of the facts to be questioned. An historian, accordingly, who hath a genius for narration, seldom fails to engage our belief. The same facts related in a manner cold and indistinct, are not suffered to pass without examination: a thing ill described is like an object seen at a distance, or through a mist; we doubt whether it be a reality or a fiction. Cicero says, that to relate the manner in which an event passed, not only enlivens the story, but makes it appear more credible.\* For that reason, a poet who can warm and animate his reader, may employ bolder fictions than ought to be ventured by an inferior genius; the reader once thoroughly engaged, is susceptible of the strongest impressions:

Veraque constituunt, quæ belle tangere possunt  
Anreis, et lepido quæ sunt fucata sonore.

*Lucretius, lib. I. l. 644.*

\* *De Oratore, lib. ii. sect. 21.*



A masterly painting has the same effect: Le Brun is no small support to Quintus Curtius: and among the vulgar in Italy, the belief of scripture-history is, perhaps, founded as much upon the authority of Raphael, Michael Angelo, and other celebrated painters, as upon that of the sacred writers.\*

The foregoing theory must have fatigued the reader with much dry reasoning, but his labour will not be fruitless; because from that theory are derived many useful rules in criticism, which shall be mentioned in their proper places. One specimen shall be our present entertainment. Events that surprise by being unexpected, and yet are natural, enliven greatly an epic poem: but in such a poem, if it pretend to copy human manners and actions, no improbable incident ought to be admitted; that is, no incident contrary to the order and course of nature. A chain of imagined incidents linked together according to the order of nature, finds easy admittance into the mind: and a lively narrative of such incidents occasions complete images, or in other words, ideal presence: but our judgment revolts against an improbable incident; and, if we once begin to doubt of its reality, farewell relish and concern—an unhappy effect; for it will require more than an ordinary effort to restore the waking dream, and to make the reader conceive even the more probable incidents as passing in his presence.

I never was an admirer of machinery in an epic poem, and I now find my taste justified by reason; the foregoing argument concluding still more strong-

\* At quæ Polycleto defuerent, Phidæ atque Alcameni dantur. Phidias tamén diis quam hominibus efficiendis melior artifex traditur: in ebore vero longe citra æmulum, vel si nihil nisi Minervam Athenis, aut Olympium in Elide Jovem fecisset, cujus pulchritudo adjecisse aliquid etiam receptæ religioni videtur, adeo majestatis operis Deum æquavit. *Quintilian, lib. XII. cap. x. sect. 1.*



ly against imaginary beings, than against improbable facts : fictions of that nature may amuse by their novelty and singularity ; but they never move the sympathetic passions, because they cannot impose on the mind any perception of reality. I appeal to the discerning reader, whether that observation be not applicable to the machinery of Tasso and of Voltaire : such machinery is not only in itself cold and uninteresting, but gives an air of fiction to the whole composition. A burlesque poem, such as the *Lutrin* or the *Dispensary*, may employ machinery with success ; for these poems, though they assume the air of history, give entertainment chiefly by their pleasant and ludicrous pictures, to which machinery contributes : it is not the aim of such a poem, to raise our sympathy : and for that reason a strict imitation of nature is not required. A poem professedly ludicrous, may employ machinery to great advantage and the more extravagant the better.

Having assigned the means by which fiction commands our passions ; what only remains for accomplishing our present task, is to assign the final cause. I have already mentioned, that fiction, by means of language, has the command of our sympathy for the good of others. By the same means, our sympathy may also be raised for our own good. In the fourth section of the present chapter, it is observed, that examples both of virtue and of vice raise virtuous emotions : which becoming stronger by exercise, tend to make us virtuous by habit, as well as by principle. I now further observe, that examples confined to real events are not so frequent as without other means to produce a habit of virtue : if they be, they are not recorded by historians. It therefore shows great wisdom, to form us in such a manner, as to



be susceptible of the same improvement from fable that we receive from genuine history. By that contrivance, examples to improve us in virtue may be multiplied without end: no other sort of discipline contributes more to make virtue habitual, and no other sort is so agreeable in the application. I add another final cause with thorough satisfaction: because it shows, that the Author of our nature is not less kindly provident for the happiness of his creatures, than for the regularity of their conduct: the power that fiction hath over the mind affords an endless variety of refined amusements always at hand to employ a vacant hour: such amusements are a fine resource in solitude; and, by cheering and sweetening the mind, contribute mightily to social happiness.

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## PART II.

EMOTIONS AND PASSIONS, AS PLEASANT AND PAINFUL, AGREEABLE AND DISAGREEABLE.—MODIFICATIONS OF THESE QUALITIES.

It will naturally occur at first, that a discourse upon the passions ought to commence with explaining the qualities now mentioned: but upon trial, I found that this explanation could not be made distinctly, till the difference should first be ascertained between an emotion and a passion, and their causes unfolded.

Great obscurity may be observed among writers with regard to the present point: particularly no care is taken to distinguish agreeable from plea-



sant, disagreeable from painful; or rather these terms are deemed synonymous. This is an error not at all venial in the science of ethics; as instances can and shall be given, of painful passions that are agreeable, and of pleasant passions that are disagreeable. These terms, it is true, are used indifferently in familiar conversation, and in compositions for amusement; but more accuracy is required from those who profess to explain the passions. In writing upon the critical art, I would avoid every refinement that may seem more curious than useful: but the proper meaning of the terms under consideration must be ascertained, in order to understand the passions, and some of their effects that are intimately connected with criticism.

I shall endeavour to explain these terms by familiar examples. Viewing a fine garden, I perceive it to be beautiful or agreeable; and I consider the beauty or agreeableness as belonging to the object, or as one of its qualities. When I turn my attention from the garden to what passes in my mind, I am conscious of a pleasant emotion, of which the garden is the cause: the pleasure here is felt, as a quality, not of the garden, but of the emotion produced by it. I give an opposite example. A rotten carcass is disagreeable, and raises in the spectator a painful emotion: the disagreeableness is a quality of the object; the pain is a quality of the emotion produced by it. In a word, agreeable and disagreeable are qualities of the objects we *perceive*; pleasant and painful are qualities of the emotions we *feel*: the former qualities are perceived as adhering to objects; the latter are felt as existing within us.

But a passion or emotion, beside being felt, is frequently made an object of thought or reflection: we examine it; we inquire into its nature, its cause,



and its effects. In that view, like other objects, it is either agreeable or disagreeable. Hence clearly appear the different significations of the terms under consideration, as applied to passion; when a passion is termed *pleasant or painful*, we refer to the actual feeling; when termed *agreeable or disagreeable*, we refer to it as an object of thought or reflection; a passion is pleasant or painful to the person in whom it exists; it is agreeable or disagreeable to the person who makes it a subject of contemplation.

In the description of emotions and passions, these terms do not always coincide: to make which evident, we must endeavour to ascertain, first, what passions and emotions are pleasant, what painful; and next, what are agreeable, what disagreeable. With respect to both, there are general rules, which, if I can trust to induction, admit not a single exception. The nature of an emotion or passion, as pleasant or painful, depends entirely on its cause: the emotion produced by an agreeable object is invariably pleasant; and the emotion produced by a disagreeable object is invariably painful.\* Thus a lofty oak, a generous action, a valuable discovery in art or science, are agreeable objects that invariably produce pleasant emotions. A stinking puddle, a treacherous action, an irregular, ill-contrived edifice, being disagreeable objects, produce painful emotions. Selfish passions are pleasant, for they arise from self, an agreeable object or cause. A social passion directed upon an agreeable object is always pleasant; directed upon an object in distress is painful.† Lastly, all dissocial passions, such as envy, resentment, malice, being caused by disagreeable objects, cannot fail to be painful.

\* See part vii. of this chapter.

† See part vii. of this chapter.



A general rule for the agreeableness or disagreeableness of emotions and passions is a more difficult enterprize: it must be attempted however. We have a sense of a common nature in every species of animals, particularly in our own: and we have a conviction that this common nature is *right*, or *perfect*, and that individuals *ought* to be made conformable to it.\* To every faculty, to every passion, and to every bodily member, is assigned a proper office and a due proportion: if one limb be longer than the other, or be disproportioned to the whole, it is wrong and disagreeable: if a passion deviate from the common nature, by being too strong or too weak, it is also wrong and disagreeable: but as far as conformable to common nature, every emotion and every passion is perceived by us to be right, and as it ought to be; and upon that account it must appear agreeable. That this holds true in pleasant emotions and passions, will readily be admitted: but the painful are no less natural than the other: and therefore ought not to be an exception. Thus the painful emotion raised by a monstrous birth or brutal action, is no less agreeable upon reflection, than the pleasant emotion raised by a flowing river or a lofty dome: and the painful passions of grief and pity are agreeable, and applauded by all the world.

Another rule more simple and direct for ascertaining the agreeableness or disagreeableness of a passion as opposed to an emotion, is derived from the desire that accompanies it. If the desire be to perform a right action in order to produce a good effect, the passion is agreeable: If the desire be to do a wrong action in order to produce an ill effect, the passion is disagreeable. Thus, passions

\* See this doctrine fully explained, chap. xxv. *Standard of Taste.*



as well as actions are governed by the moral sense. These rules by the wisdom of Providence coincide: a passion that is conformable to our common nature must tend to good; and a passion that deviates from our common nature must tend to ill.

This deduction may be carried a great way farther: but to avoid intricacy and obscurity, I make but one other step. A passion which, as aforesaid, becomes an object of thought to a spectator, may have the effect to produce a passion or emotion in him; for it is natural, that a social being should be affected with the passions of others. Passions or emotions thus generated, submit, in common with others, to the general law above mentioned, namely, that an agreeable object produces a pleasant emotion, and a disagreeable object a painful emotion. Thus the passion of gratitude, being to a spectator an agreeable object, produceth in him the pleasant passion of love to the grateful person: and malice being to a spectator a disagreeable object, produceth in him the painful passion of hatred to the malicious person.

We are now prepared for examples of pleasant passions that are disagreeable, and of painful passions that are agreeable. Self-love, as long as confined within just bounds, is a passion both pleasant and agreeable: in excess it is disagreeable, though it continues to be still pleasant. Our appetites are precisely in the same condition. Resentment, on the other hand, is, in every stage of the passion, painful; but is not disagreeable unless in excess. Pity is always painful, yet always agreeable. Vanity, on the contrary, is always pleasant, yet always disagreeable. But however distinct these qualities are, they coincide, I acknowledge, in one class of passions: all vicious passions tending to



the hurt of others, are equally painful and disagreeable.

The foregoing qualities of pleasant and painful, may be sufficient for ordinary subjects: but with respect to the science of criticism, it is necessary, that we also be made acquainted with the several modifications of these qualities, with the modifications at least that make the greatest figure. Even at first view one is sensible, that the pleasure or pain of one passion differs from that of another: how distant the pleasure of revenge gratified from that of love? so distant, as that we cannot without reluctance admit them to be any way related. That the same quality of pleasure should be so differently modified in different passions, will not be surprising, when we reflect on the boundless variety of agreeable sounds, tastes, and smells, daily perceived. Our discernment reaches differences still more minute, in objects even of the same sense: we have no difficulty to distinguish different sweets, different sour, and different bitters; honey is sweet, so is sugar, and yet the one never is mistaken for the other: our sense of smelling is sufficiently acute, to distinguish varieties in sweet smelling flowers without end. With respect to passions and emotions, their differences as to pleasant and painful have no limits; though we want acuteness of feeling for the more delicate modifications. There is here an analogy between our internal and external senses: the latter are sufficiently acute for all the useful purposes of life, and so are the former. Some persons indeed, Nature's favourites, have a wonderful acuteness of sense, which to them unfolds many a delightful scene totally hid from vulgar eyes. But if such refined pleasure be confined to a small number, it is however wisely ordered that others are not sensible of the defect; nor



detracts it from their happiness that others secretly are more happy. With relation to the fine arts only, that qualification seems essential; and there it is termed *delicacy of taste*.

Should an author of such a taste attempt to describe all those varieties in pleasant and painful emotions which he himself feels, he would soon meet an invincible obstacle in the poverty of language: a people must be thoroughly refined, before they invent words for expressing the more delicate feelings; and for that reason, no known tongue hitherto has reached that perfection. We must therefore rest satisfied with an explanation of the more obvious modifications.

In forming a comparison between pleasant passions of different kinds, we conceive some of them to be gross, some refined. Those pleasures of external sense that are felt as at the organ of sense, are conceived to be corporeal, or gross:\* the pleasure of the eye and the ear are felt to be internal; and for that reason are conceived to be more pure and refined.

The social affections are conceived by all to be more refined than the selfish. Sympathy and humanity are universally esteemed the finest temper of mind: and for that reason, the prevalence of the social affections in the progress of society, is held to be a refinement in our nature. A savage knows little of social affection, and therefore is not qualified to compare selfish and social pleasure; but a man, after acquiring a high relish for the latter, loses not thereby a taste for the former: he is qualified to judge, and he will give preference to social pleasures as more sweet and refined. In fact they maintain that character, not only in the

\* See the Introduction.



direct feeling, but also when we make them the subject of reflection: the social passions are far more agreeable than the selfish, and rise much higher in our esteem.

There are differences not less remarkable among the painful passions. Some are voluntary, some involuntary: the pain of the gout is an example of the latter: grief, of the former, which in some cases is so voluntary as to reject all consolation. One pain softens the temper, pity is an instance: one intends to render us savage and cruel, which is the case of revenge. I value myself upon sympathy: I hate and despise myself for envy.

Social affections have an advantage over the selfish, not only with respect to pleasure, as above explained, but also with respect to pain. The pain of an affront, the pain of want, the pain of disappointment, and a thousand other selfish pains, are cruciating and tormenting, and tend to a habit of peevishness and discontent. Social pains have a very different tendency: the pain of sympathy, for example, is not only voluntary, but softens my temper, and raises me in my own esteem.

Refined manners, and polite behaviour, must not be deemed altogether artificial: men who, inured to the sweets of society, cultivate humanity, find an elegant pleasure in preferring others, and making them happy, of which the proud, the selfish, scarce have a conception.

Ridicule, which chiefly arises from pride, a selfish passion, is at best but a gross pleasure: a people, it is true, must have emerged out of barbarity before they can have a taste for ridicule; but it is too rough an entertainment for the polished and refined. Cicero discovers in Plautus a happy talent for ridicule, and a peculiar delicacy of wit: but Horace, who made a figure in the court of Augus-



tus, where taste was considerably purified, declares against the lowness and roughness of that author's raillery. Ridicule is banished France, and is losing ground in England.

Other modifications of pleasant passions will be occasionally mentioned hereafter. Particularly the modifications of *high* and *low* are to be handled in the chapter of grandeur and sublimity ; and the modifications of *dignified* and *mean*, in the chapter of dignity and grace.

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### PART III.

#### INTERRUPTED EXISTENCE OF EMOTIONS AND PASSIONS.— THEIR GROWTH AND DECAY.

WERE it the nature of an emotion to continue, like colour and figure, in its present state till varied by some operating cause, the condition of man would be deplorable : it is ordered wisely, that emotions should more resemble another attribute of matter, namely, motion, which requires the constant exertion of an operating cause, and ceases when the cause is withdrawn. An emotion may subsist while its cause is present ; and when its cause is removed, may subsist by means of an idea, though in a fainter manner : but the moment another thought breaks in and engrosses the mind, the emotion is gone, and is no longer felt : if it return with its cause, or an idea of its cause, it again vanisheth with them when other thoughts crowd in. The reason is, that an emotion or passion is connected with the perception or idea of its cause, so intimately as not to have any independent exist-



ence: a strong passion, it is true, hath a mighty influence to detain its cause in the mind; but not so as to detain it for ever, because a succession of perceptions or ideas is unavoidable.\* Further, even while a passion subsists, it seldom continues long in the same tone, but is successively vigorous and faint; the vigour of a passion depends on the impression made by its cause; and a cause makes its deepest impression, when, happening to be the single interesting object, it attracts our whole attention:† its impression is slighter when our attention is divided between it and other objects; and at that time the passion is fainter in proportion.

When emotions and passions are felt thus by intervals, and have not a continued existence, it may be thought a nice problem to determine when they are the same, when different. In a strict philosophic view, every single impression, made even by the same object, is distinguishable from what have gone before, and from what succeed: neither is an emotion raised by an idea the same with what is raised by a sight of the object. But such accuracy not being found in common apprehension, is not necessary in common language: the emotions raised by a fine landscape in its successive appearances are not distinguishable from each other, nor even from those raised by successive ideas of the object; all of them being held to be the same: a passion also is always reckoned the same as long as it is fixed upon the same object; and thus love and hatred are said to continue the same for life. Nay, so loose are we in that way of thinking, that many passions are reckoned the same even after a change

\* See this point explained afterwards, chap. ix.

† See the Appendix, containing definitions and explanation of terms, sect. 33.



of object ; which is the case of all passions that proceed from some peculiar propensity : envy, for example, is considered to be the same passion, not only while it is directed to the same person, but even where it comprehends many persons at once : pride and malice are examples of the same. So much was necessary to be said upon the identity of a passion and emotion, in order to prepare for examining their growth and decay.

The growth and decay of passions and emotions, traced through all their mazes, is a subject too extensive for an undertaking like the present : I pretend only to give a cursory view of it, such as may be necessary for the purposes of criticism. Some emotions are produced in their utmost perfection, and have a very short endurance ; which is the case of surprise, of wonder, and sometimes of terror. Emotions raised by inanimate objects, trees, rivers, buildings, pictures, arrive at perfection almost instantaneously ; and they have a long endurance, a second view producing nearly the same pleasure with the first. Love, hatred, and some other passions, swell gradually to a certain pitch ; after which they decay gradually. Envy, malice, pride, scarce ever decay. Some passions, such as gratitude and revenge, are often exhausted by a single act of gratification : other passions, such as pride, malice, envy, love, hatred, are not so exhausted ; but having a long continuance, demand frequent gratification.

To handle every single passion and emotion with a view to these differences, would be an endless work : we must be satisfied at present with some general views. And with respect to emotions, which are quiescent because not productive of desire, their growth and decay are easily explained : an emotion caused by an inanimate object, cannot



naturally take longer time to arrive at maturity, than is necessary for a leisurely survey: such emotion also must continue long stationary, without any sensible decay; a second or third view of the object being nearly as agreeable as the first: this is the case of an emotion produced by a fine prospect, an impetuous river, or a towering hill: while a man remains the same, such objects ought to have the same effect upon him. Familiarity, however hath an influence here, as it hath every where: frequency of view, after short intervals especially, weans the mind gradually from the object, which at last loses all relish: the noblest object in the material world, a clear and serene sky, is quite disregarded, unless perhaps after a course of bad weather. An emotion raised by human virtues, qualities, or actions, may, by reiterated views of the object, swell imperceptibly, till it become so vigorous as to generate desire: in that condition it must be handled as a passion.

As to passion, I observe, first, that when nature requires a passion to be sudden, it is commonly produced in perfection; which is the case of fear and of anger. Wonder and surprise are always produced in perfection: reiterated impressions made by their cause, exhaust these passions instead of inflaming them. This will be explained afterward.\*

In the next place, when a passion hath for its foundation an original propensity peculiar to some men, it generally comes soon to maturity: the propensity, upon presenting a proper object, is immediately enlivened into a passion; which is the case of pride, of envy, and of malice.

In the third place, the growth of love and of ha-



tred is slow or quick according to circumstances: the good qualities of a person raise in me a pleasant emotion; which, by reiterated views, is swelled into a passion involving desire of that person's happiness: this desire, being freely indulged, works gradually a change internally, and at last produceth in me a settled habit of affection for that person now my friend. Affection thus produced operates precisely like an original propensity; for to enliven it into a passion, no more is required but the real or ideal presence of the object. The habit of aversion or of hatred is brought on in the same manner. And here I must observe by the way, that love and hatred signify commonly affection and aversion, not passion. The bulk of our passions are indeed affection or aversion inflamed into a passion by different circumstances: the affection I bear to my son, is inflamed into the passion of fear when he is in danger; becomes hope when he hath a prospect of good fortune; becomes admiration when he performs a laudable action; and shame when he commits any wrong: aversion becomes fear when there is a prospect of good fortune to my enemy; becomes hope when he is in danger; becomes joy when he is in distress; and sorrow when a laudable action is performed by him.

Fourthly, passions generally have a tendency to excess, occasioned by the following means. The mind affected by any passion, is not in a proper state for distinct perception, nor for cool reflection: it hath always a strong bias to the object of an agreeable passion, and a bias no less strong against the object of a disagreeable passion. The object of love, for example, however indifferent to others, is to the lover's conviction a paragon; and of hatred, is vice itself without alloy. What less can such delusion operate, than to swell the passion



beyond what it was at first? for if the seeing or conversing with a fine woman, have had the effect to carry me from indifference to love; how much stronger must her influence be, when now to my conviction she is an angel? and hatred as well as other passions, must run the same course. Thus between a passion and its object there is a natural operation, resembling action and reaction in physics: a passion acting upon its object, magnifies it greatly in appearance: and this magnified object reacting upon the passion, swells and inflames it mightily.

Fifthly, the growth of some passion depends often on occasional circumstances: obstacles to gratification, for example, never fail to augment and inflame a passion; because a constant endeavour to remove an obstacle, preserves the object of the passion ever in view, which swells the passion by impressions frequently reiterated: thus the restraint of conscience, when an obstacle to love, agitates the mind and inflames the passion:

*Quod licet, ingratum est: quod non licet, acrius urit.*  
*Si nunquam Danaën habuisset aenea turris,*  
*Non esset Danaë de Jove facta parens.*

*Ovid, Amor. 1. 2.*

At the same time, the mind, distressed with the obstacles, becomes impatient for gratification, and consequently more desirous of it. Shakspear expresses this observation finely:

*All impediments in fancy's course,*  
*Are motives of more fancy.*

We need no better example than a lover who hath many rivals. Even the caprices of a mistress have the effect to inflame love; these occasioning uncer-



tainty of success, tend naturally to make the anxious lover overvalue the happiness of fruition.

So much upon the growth of passions: their continuance and decay come next under consideration. And, first, it is a general law of nature, That things sudden in their growth are equally sudden in their decay. This is commonly the case of anger. And, with respect to wonder and surprise, which also suddenly decay, another reason concurs, that their causes are of short duration: novelty soon degenerates into familiarity; and the unexpectedness of an object is soon sunk in the pleasure that the object affords. Fear, which is a passion of greater importance as tending to self-preservation, is often instantaneous; and yet is of equal duration with its cause: nay, it frequently subsists after the cause is removed.

In the next place, a passion founded on a peculiar propensity, subsists generally for ever; which is the case of pride, envy, and malice: objects are never wanting to inflame the propensity into a passion.

Thirdly, it may be laid down as a general law of nature, That every passion ceases upon attaining its ultimate end. To explain that law, we must distinguish between a particular and a general end. I call a particular end what may be accomplished by a single act: a general end, on the contrary, admits acts without number: because it cannot be said, that a general end is ever fully accomplished, while the object of the passion subsists. Gratitude and revenge are examples of the first kind: the ends they aim at may be accomplished by a single act; and, when that act is performed, the passions are necessarily at an end. Love and hatred are examples of the other kind; desire of doing good or of doing mischief to an individual, is a general



end which admits acts without number, and which seldom is fully accomplished: therefore these passions have frequently the same duration with their objects.

Lastly, it will afford us another general view, to consider the difference between an original propensity, and affection or aversion produced by custom. The former adheres too close to the constitution ever to be eradicated; and for that reason, the passions to which it gives birth, continue during life with no remarkable diminution. The latter, which owe their birth and increment to time, owe their decay to the same cause: affection and aversion decay gradually as they grow; and accordingly hatred as well as love are extinguished by long absence. Affection decays more gradually between persons, who, living together, have daily occasion to testify mutually their good-will and kindness: and, when affection is decayed, habit supplies its place; for it makes these persons necessary to each other, by the pain of separation.\* Affection to children hath a long endurance, longer perhaps than any other affection: its growth keeps pace with that of its objects: they display new beauties and qualifications daily, to feed and augment the affection. But whenever the affection becomes stationary, it must begin to decay; with a slow pace, indeed, in proportion to its increment. In short, man with respect to this life is a temporary being: he grows, becomes stationary, decays; and so must all his powers and passions.

\* See Chapter XIV.



## PART IV.

## CO-EXISTENT EMOTIONS AND PASSIONS.

FOR a thorough knowledge of the human passions and emotions, it is not sufficient that they be examined singly and separately: as a plurality of them are sometimes felt at the same instant, the manner of their co-existence, and the effects thereby produced, ought also to be examined. This subject is extensive; and it will be difficult to trace all the laws that govern its endless variety of cases: if such an undertaking can be brought to perfection, it must be by degrees. The following hints may suffice for a first attempt.

We begin with emotions raised by different sounds, as the simplest case. Two sounds that mix, and, as it were, incorporate before they reach the ear, are said to be concordant. That each of the two sounds, even after their union, produceth an emotion of its own, must be admitted: but these emotions, like the sounds that produce them, mix so intimately, as to be rather one complex emotion than two emotions in conjunction. Two sounds that refuse incorporation or mixture, are said to be discordant: and when heard at the same instant, the emotions produced by them are unpleasant in conjunction, however pleasant separately.

Similar to the emotion raised by mixed sounds is the emotion raised by an object of sight with its several qualities: a tree, for example, with its qualities of colour, figure, size, &c. is perceived to be one object; and the emotion it produceth is



rather one complex emotion than different emotions combined.

With respect to co-existent emotions produced by different objects of sight, it must be observed, that however intimately connected such objects may be, there cannot be a concordance among them like what is perceived in some sounds. Different objects of sight, meaning objects that can exist each of them independent of the others, never mix nor incorporate in the act of vision: each object is perceived as it exists, separately from others; and each raiseth an emotion different from that raised by the other. And the same holds in all the causes of emotion or passion that can exist independent of each other, sounds only excepted.

To explain the manner in which such emotions exist, similar emotions must be distinguished from those that are dissimilar. Two emotions are said to be similar, when they tend each of them to produce the same tone of mind: cheerful emotions, however different their causes may be, are similar: and so are those which are melancholy. Dissimilar emotions are easily explained by their opposition to what are similar: pride and humility, gaiety and gloominess, are dissimilar emotions.

Emotions perfectly similar, readily combine and unite,\* so as in a manner to become one complex emotion; witness the emotions produced by a number of flowers in a parterre, or of trees in a wood. Emotions that are opposite, or extremely dissimilar, never combine or unite: the mind cannot simultaneously take on opposite tones: it cannot at

\* It is easier to conceive the manner of co-existence of similar emotions, than to describe it. They cannot be said to mix or incorporate, like concordant sounds: their union is rather of agreement or concord; and therefore I have chosen the words in the text, not as sufficient to express clearly the manner of their co-existence, but only as less liable to exception than any other I can find.



the same instant be both joyful and sad, angry and satisfied, proud and humble : dissimilar emotions may succeed each other with rapidity, but they cannot exist simultaneously.

Between these two extremes, emotions unite more or less in proportion to the degree of their resemblance, and the degree in which their causes are connected. Thus the emotions produced by a fine landscape and the singing of birds, being similar in a considerable degree, readily unite, though their causes are little connected. And the same happens where the causes are intimately connected, though the emotions themselves have little resemblance to each other; an example of which is a mistress in distress, whose beauty gives pleasure, and her distress pain: these two emotions, proceeding from different views of the object, have very little resemblance to each other; and yet so intimately connected are their causes, as to force them into a sort of complex emotion, partly pleasant, partly painful. This clearly explains some expressions common in poetry, *a sweet distress, a pleasant pain*.

It was necessary to describe with some accuracy, in what manner similar and dissimilar emotions co-exist in the mind, in order to explain their different effects, both internal and external. This subject, though obscure, is capable to be set in a clear light; and it merits attention, not only for its extensive use in criticism, but for the nobler purpose of decyphering many intricacies in the actions of men. Beginning with internal effects, I discover two, clearly distinguishable from each other, both of them produced by pleasant emotions that are similar; of which, the one may be represented by addition in numbers, the other by harmony in sounds. Two pleasant emotions that are similar,



readily unite when they are co-existent ; and the pleasure felt in the union, is the sum of the two pleasures : the same emotions in succession, are far from making the same figure ; because the mind, at no instant of the succession, is conscious of more than a single emotion. This doctrine may aptly be illustrated by a landscape comprehending hills, valleys, plains, rivers, trees, &c. : the emotions produced by these several objects, being similar in a high degree, as falling in easily and sweetly with the same tone of mind, are in conjunction extremely pleasant. This multiplied effect is felt from objects even of different senses, as where a landscape is conjoined with the music of birds and odour of flowers ; and results partly from the resemblance of the emotions and partly from the connexion of their causes : whence it follows, that the effect must be the greatest, where the causes are intimately connected and the emotions perfectly similar. The same rule is obviously applicable to painful emotions that are similar and co-existent.

The other pleasure arising from pleasant emotions similar and co-existent, cannot be better explained than by the foregoing example of a landscape, where the sight, hearing, and smelling, are employed : beside the accumulated pleasure above mentioned, of so many different similar emotions, a pleasure of a different kind is felt from the concord of these emotions. As that pleasure resembles greatly the pleasure of concordant sounds, it may be termed the *Harmony of Emotions*. This harmony is felt in the different emotions occasioned by the visible objects ; but it is felt still more sensibly in the emotions occasioned by the objects of different senses, as where the emotions of the eye are combined with those of the ear. The former pleasure comes under the rule of addition : this



comes under a different rule. It is directly in proportion to the degree of resemblance between the emotions, and inversely in proportion to the degree of connexion between the causes: to feel this pleasure in perfection, the resemblance between the emotions cannot be too strong, nor the connexion between their causes too slight. The former condition is self-evident; and the reason of the latter is, that the pleasure of harmony is felt from various similar emotions, distinct from each other, and yet sweetly combining in the mind; which excludes causes intimately connected, for the emotions produced by them are forced into one complex emotion. This pleasure of concord or harmony, which is the result of pleasing emotions, and cannot have place with respect to those that are painful, will be further illustrated, when the emotions produced by the sound of words and their meaning are taken under consideration.\*

The pleasure of concord from conjoined emotions, is felt even where the emotions are not perfectly similar. Though love be a pleasant passion, yet by its softness and tenderness it resembles in a considerable degree the painful passion of pity or of grief; and for that reason, love accords better with these passions than with what are gay and sprightly. I give the following example from Catullus, where the concord between love and grief has a fine effect even in so slight a subject as the death of a sparrow.

*Lugete, ô Veneres, Cupidinesque,  
Et quantum est hominum venustiorum !  
Passer mortuus est meæ puelæ,  
Quem plus illa oculis suis amabat.  
Nam mellitus erat, suamque norat*

\*Chap. xviii. sect. 3.



*Ipsam tam bene, quam puella matrem :  
Nec sese a gremio illius movebat ;  
Sed circumspiciens modo huc, modo illuc,  
Ad solam dominam usque pipilabat.  
Qui nunc it per iter tenebriposum,  
Illuc, unde negant redire quemquam.  
At vobis male sit, malæ tenebræ  
Orci, quæ omnia bella devoratis ;  
Tam bellum mihi passerum abstulistis.  
O factum male, ô miselle passer.  
Tua nunc opera, meæ puellæ  
Flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.*

Next as to the effects of dissimilar emotions, which we may guess will be opposite to what are above described. Dissimilar co-existent emotions, as said above, never fail to distress the mind by the difference of their tones ; from which situation a feeling of harmony never can proceed ; and this holds whether the causes be connected or not. But it holds more remarkably where the causes are connected ; for in that case the dissimilar emotions being forced into an unnatural union, produce an actual feeling of discord. In the next place, if we would estimate the force of dissimilar emotions co-existent, we must distinguish between their causes as connected or unconnected : and in order to compute their force in the former case, subtraction must be used instead of addition ; which will be evident from what follows. Dissimilar emotions forced into union by the connexion of their causes, are felt obscurely and imperfectly ; for each tends to vary the tone of mind that is suited to the other ; and the mind thus distracted between two objects, is at no instant in a condition to receive a deep impression from either. Dissimilar emotions proceeding from unconnected causes, are in a very different condition ; for as there is nothing to force them into union, they are never felt but in succes-



sion ; by which means, each hath an opportunity to make a complete impression.

This curious theory requires to be illustrated by examples. In reading the description of the dismal waste, book I. of *Paradise Lost*, we are sensible of a confused feeling, arising from dissimilar emotions forced into union, to wit, the beauty of the description, and the horror of the object described.

Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,  
The seat of desolation, void of light,  
Saye what the glimmering of these livid flames  
Casts pale and dreadful ?

And with respect to this and many similar passages in *Paradise Lost*, we are sensible, that the emotions being obscured by each other, make neither of them that figure they would make separately. For the same reason, ascending smoke in a calm morning, which inspires stillness and tranquillity, is improper in a picture full of violent action. A parterre, partly ornamented, partly in disorder, produces a mixt feeling of the same sort. Two great armies in act to engage, mix the dissimilar emotions of grandeur and of terror.

Sembra d'alberi densi alta foresta  
L'un campo, e l'altro ; di tant' aste abbonda.  
Son tesi gli archi, e son le lance in resta :  
Vibransi i dardi, e rotasi ogni fionda.  
Ogni cavallo in guerra anco s'appresta,  
Gli odii, e 'l furor del suo signor seconda :  
Rapsa, batte, nitrisce, e si raggira,  
Gonfia le nari ; e fumo, e fuoco spira.  
Bello in sì bella vista anco è l' orrore :  
E di mezzo la tema esce il diletto.  
Ne men le trombe orribili e canore,  
Sono a gli orecchi, lieto e fero oggetto.



Pur il campo fedel, benchè minore,  
Par di suon più mirabile, e d'aspeto.  
E canta in più guerriero e chiaro carme  
Ogni sua tromba, e maggior luce han l'arme.

*Gerusalemme liberata, cant. xx. st. 29. & 30.*

Suppose a virtuous man has drawn on himself a great misfortune, by a fault incident to human nature, and therefore venial: the remorse he feels aggravates his distress, and consequently raises our pity to a high pitch: we at the same time blame the man; and the indignation raised by the fault he has committed, is dissimilar to pity: these two passions, however, proceeding from the same object, are forced into a sort of union; but the indignation is so slight, as scarce to be felt in the mixture with pity. Subjects of this kind are of all the fittest for tragedy; but of that afterward.\*

Opposite emotions are so dissimilar as not to admit any sort of union, even where they proceed from causes the most intimately connected. Love to a mistress, and resentment for her infidelity, are of that nature: they cannot exist otherwise than in succession, which by the connexion of their causes is commonly rapid; and these emotions will govern alternately, till one of them obtain the ascendant, or both be spent. A succession opens to me by the death of a worthy man, who was my friend as well as my kinsman: when I think of my friend, I am grieved; but the succession gives me joy: These two causes are intimately connected; for the succession is the direct consequence of my friend's death: the emotions, however, being opposite, do not mix; they prevail alternately, perhaps, for a course of time, till grief for my friend's death be banished by the pleasures of opulence. A vir-

\* Chapter xxii.



tuous man suffering unjustly, is an example of the same kind: I pity him, and have great indignation at the author of the wrong. These emotions proceed from causes nearly connected; but being directed to different objects, they are not forced into union: their opposition preserves them distinct: and accordingly they are found to prevail alternately.

I proceed to examples of dissimilar emotions arising from unconnected causes. Good and bad news of equal importance arriving at the same instant from different quarters, produce opposite emotions, the discordance of which is not felt, because they are not forced into union: they govern alternately, commonly in a quick succession, till their force be spent:

*Shylock.* How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

*Tubal.* I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

*Shy.* Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Francfort? the curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that, and other precious, precious jewels! I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear; O, would she were hears'd at my foot and the ducats in her coffin. No news of them; why, so! and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge, nor no ill luck stirring but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs but o' my breathing, no tears but o' my shedding.

*Tub.* Yes, other men have ill luck too; Antonio, as I heard in Genoa——

*Shy.* What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

*Tub.* Hath an Argosie cast away, coming from Tripolis.

*Shy.* I thank God, I thank God; is it true? is it true?

*Tub.* I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

*Shy.* I thank thee, good Tubal; good news, good news, ha: where, in Genoa?



**Tub.** Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night, fourscore ducats.

**Shy.** Thou stick'st a dagger in me; I shall never see my gold again; fourscore ducats at a sitting, fourscore ducats!

**Tub.** There came divers of Anthonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

**Shy.** I am glad of it, I'll plague him, I'll torture him; I am glad of it.

**Tub.** One of them show'd me a ring, that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

**Shy.** Out upon her! thou torturest me. Tubal; it was my Turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor; I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkies.

**Tub.** But Anthonio is certainly undone.

**Shy.** Nay, that's true, that's very true; go, see me an officer, bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

*Merchant of Venice, Act III. Sc. 1.*

In the same manner, good news arriving to a man labouring under distress, occasions a vibration in his mind from the one to the other:

**Osmyn.** By Heav'n thou'st roused me from my lethargy.

The spirit which was deaf to my own wrongs,  
And the loud cries of my dead father's blood,  
Deaf to revenge—nay, which refus'd to hear  
The piercing sighs and murmurs of my love  
Yet unenjoy'd; what not Almeria could  
Revive, or raise, my people's voice has waken'd.

O my Antonio, I am all on fire,  
My soul is up in arms, ready to charge  
And bear amidst the foe with conqu'ring troops.  
I hear 'em call to lead 'em on to liberty,  
To victory; their shouts and clamours rend  
My ears, and reach the heav'ns: where is the king?  
Where is Alphonso? ha! where! where indeed?  
O I could tear and burst the strings of life,  
To break these chains. Off, off, ye stains of royalty!  
Off slavery! O curse, that I alone  
Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I  
Would soar, and stoop at victory beneath!

*Mourning Bride, Act III. Sc. 2.*



If the emotions be unequal in force, the stronger after a conflict will extinguish the weaker. Thus the loss of a house by fire, or of a sum of money by bankruptcy, will make no figure in opposition to the birth of a long-expected son, who is to inherit an opulent fortune : after some slight vibrations, the mind settles in joy, and the loss is forgot.

The foregoing observations will be found of great use in the fine arts. Many practical rules are derived from them, which shall afterward be mentioned ; but for instant gratification in part, the reader will accept the following specimen, being an application of these observations to music. It must be premised, that no disagreeable combination of sounds is entitled to the name of music : for all music is resolvable into melody and harmony, which imply agreeableness in their very conception.\* Secondly, the agreeableness of vocal music differs from that of instrumental : the former, being intended to accompany words, ought to be expressive of the sentiment that they convey ; but the latter having no connexion with words, may be agreeable without relation to any sentiment : harmony, properly so called, though delightful when in perfection, hath no relation to sentiment ; and we often find melody without the least tincture of it.† Thirdly, in vocal music, the intimate connexion of sense and sound rejects dissimilar emo-

\* Sounds may be so contrived as to produce horror, and several other painful feelings, which in a tragedy, or in an opera, may be introduced with advantage to accompany the representation of a dissocial or disagreeable passion. But such sounds must in themselves be disagreeable ; and upon that account cannot be dignified with the name of music.

† It is beyond the power of music to raise a passion or a sentiment : but it is in the power of music to raise emotions similar to what are raised by sentiments expressed in words pronounced with propriety and grace ; and such music may justly be termed *sentimental*.



tions, those especially that are opposite. Similar emotions produced by the sense and the sound, go naturally into union; and at the same time are concordant or harmonious: but dissimilar emotions, forced into union by these causes intimately connected, obscure each other, and are also unpleasant by discordance.

These premises make it easy to determine what sort of poetical compositions are fitted for music. In general, as music in all its various tones ought to be agreeable, it never can be concordant with any composition in language expressing a disagreeable passion, or describing a disagreeable object: for here the emotions raised by the sense and by the sound, are not only dissimilar but opposite; and such emotions forced into union produce always an unpleasant mixture. Music accordingly is a very improper companion for sentiments of malice, cruelty, envy, peevishness, or of any other dissocial passion; witness among a thousand, King John's speech in Shakspeare, soliciting Hubert to murder Prince Arthur, which, even in the most cursory view, will appear incompatible with any sort of Music. Music is a companion no less improper for the description of any disagreeable object, such as that of Polyphemus in the third book of the *Æneid*; or that of Sin in the second book of *Paradise Lost*: the horror of the object described and the pleasure of the music, would be highly discordant.

With regard to vocal music, there is an additional reason against associating it with disagreeable passions. The external signs of such passions are painful; the looks and gestures to the eye, and the tone of pronunciation to the ear: such tones therefore can never be expressed musically, for music must be pleasant, or it is not music.



On the other hand, music associates finely with poems that tend to inspire pleasant emotions: music, for example, in a cheerful tone, is perfectly concordant with every motion in the same tone; and hence our taste for airs expressive of mirth and jollity. Sympathetic joy associates finely with cheerful music: and sympathetic pain no less finely with music that is tender and melancholy. All the different emotions of love, namely, tenderness, concern, anxiety, pain of absence, hope, fear, accord delightfully with music: and accordingly a person in love, even when unkindly treated, is soothed by music; for the tenderness of love still prevailing accords with a melancholy strain. This is finely exemplified by Shakspeare in the fourth act of *Othello*, where Desdemona calls for a song expressive of her distress. Wonderful is the delicacy of that writer's taste, which fails him not even in the most refined emotions of human nature. Melancholy music is suited to slight grief, which requires or admits consolation: but deep grief, which refuses all consolation, rejects for that reason even melancholy music.

Where the same person is both the actor and the singer, as in an opera, there is a separate reason why music should not be associated with the sentiments of any disagreeable passion, nor the description of any disagreeable object; which is, that such association is altogether unnatural: the pain, for example, that a man feels who is agitated with malice or unjust revenge, disqualifies him for relishing music, or any thing that is pleasing; and therefore to represent such a man, contrary to nature, expressing his sentiments in a song, cannot be agreeable to any audience of taste.

For a different reason, music is improper for accompanying pleasant emotions of the more impor-



tant kind; because these totally engross the mind, and leave no place for music, nor for any sort of amusement: in a perilous enterprise to dethrone a tyrant, music would be impertinent, even where hope prevails, and the prospect of success is great: Alexander attacking the Indian town, and mounting the wall, had certainly no impulse to exert his prowess in a song.

It is true, that not the least regard is paid to these rules either in the French or Italian opera: and the attachment we have to operas may at first be considered as an argument against the foregoing doctrine. But the general taste for operas is no argument: in these compositions the passions are so imperfectly expressed, as to leave the mind free for relishing music of any sort indifferently; and it cannot be disguised, that the pleasure of an opera is derived chiefly from the music, and scarce at all from the sentiments: a happy concordance of the emotions raised by the song and by the music, is extremely rare; and I venture to affirm, that there is no example of it, unless where the emotion raised by the former is agreeable as well as that raised by the latter.\*

The subject we have run through appears not a little entertaining. It is extremely curious to observe, in many instances, a plurality of causes producing in conjunction a great pleasure: in other instances, no less frequent, no conjunction, but each cause acting in opposition. To enter bluntly upon a subject of such intricacy, might gravel an

\* A censure of the same kind is pleasantly applied to the French ballettes by a celebrated writer: Si le Prince est joyeux, on prend part à sa joye, et l'on danse: s'il est triste, on veut l'égayer, et l'on danse. Mais il y a bien d'autres sujets de danses; les plus graves actions de la vie se font en dansant. Les prêtres dansent, les soldates dansent, les dieux dansent, les diables dansent, on danse jusques dans les enterremens, et tout danse à propos de tout."



acute philosopher; but taking matters in a train, the intricacy vanisheth.

Next in order, according to the method proposed, come external effects; which lead us to passions as the causes of external effects. Two co-existent passions that have the same tendency, must be similar: they accordingly readily unite, and in conjunction have double force. This is verified by experience; from which we learn, that the mind receives not impulses alternately from such passions, but one strong impulse from the whole in conjunction; and indeed it is not easy to conceive what should bar the union of passions that have all of them the same tendency.

Two passions having opposite tendencies may proceed from the same cause considered in different views. Thus a mistress may at once be the cause both of love and of resentment: her beauty inflames the passion of love; her cruelty or inconstancy causes resentment. When two such passions co-exist in the same breast, the opposition of their aim prevents any sort of union; and accordingly, they are not felt otherwise than in succession: the consequence of which must be, either that the passions will balance each other and prevent external action, or that one of them will prevail and accomplish its end. Guarini, in his *Pastor Fido*, describes beautifully the struggle between love and resentment directed to the same object:

*Corsica.* Chi vide mai, chi mai udi più strana  
E più folle, e più fero e più importuna  
Passione amorosa? amore, ed odio  
Con sì mirabile tempra in un cor misti,  
Che l'un par l'altro (e non so ben dir come)  
E si strugge, e s'avvanza, e nasce, e more.  
S'è 'l' miro alle bellezze di Mirtillo



Dal piè leggiadro al grazioso volto,  
Il vago portamento, il bel sembiante,  
Gli atti, i costumi, e le parole, h' 'l guardo ;  
M'assale Amore con sì possente foco  
Ch' i' ardo tutta, e par, ch' ogn' altro affetto  
Da questo tel sia superato, e viato ;  
Ma se poi penso all' ostinato amore,  
Ch' ei porta ad altra donna, e che per lei  
Di me non cura, e sprezza (il vo' pur dire)  
La mia famosa, e da mill' alme, e mille,  
Inchinata beltà, bramata grazia ;  
L' odio così, così l' aborro, e schivo,  
Che impossibil mi par, ch' unqua per lui  
Mi s' accendesse al cor fiamma amorosa.  
Tallor meco ragione : o s' io potessi  
Gioir del mio del dolcissimo Mirtillo,  
Sicche fosse mio tutto, e ch' altra mai  
Posseder no 'l potesse, o più d' ogn' altra  
Beata, e felicissima Corsica !  
Ed in quel punto in me sorge un talento  
Verso di lui sì dolce, e sì gentile,  
Che di seguirlo, e di pregarlo ancora,  
E di scoprirgli il cor prendo consiglio.  
Che più ? così mi stimola il desio,  
Che se potessi allor l' adorerei.  
Dall' altra parte i' mi risento, e dico,  
Un ritroso ? uno schifo ? un che non degna ?  
Un, che può d' altra donna esser amante ?  
Un, ch' ardisce mirarmi, e non m' adora ?  
E dal mio volto si difende in guisa,  
Che per amor non more ? ed io, che lui  
Dovrei veder, come molti altri i' veggio  
Supplice, e lagrimoso a' piedi miei,  
Supplice, e lagrimoso a' piedi suoi  
Sosterro di cadere ? ah non fa mai.  
Ed in questo pensier tant' ira accoglio  
Contra di lui, contra di me, che volsi  
A seguirlo il pensier, più occhi a mirarlo,  
Che 'l nome di Mirtillo, e l' amor mio  
Odio più che la morte ; e lui vorrei  
Veder il più dolente il più infelice  
Pastor, che viva ; e se potessi allora,  
Con le mie proprie man l' ucciderei.  
Così sdegno, desio, odio, ed amore  
Mi fanno guerra, ed io, che stata sono



Sempre in qui di mille cor la fiamma,  
 Di mill' alme ill tormento, ardo, e languisco :  
 E provo nel mio mal le pene altrui.

*Act I. Sc. 3.*

Ovid paints in lively colours the vibration of mind between two opposite passions directed to the same object. Althea had two brothers much beloved, who were unjustly put to death by her son Meleager in a fit of passion: she was strongly impelled to revenge; but the criminal was her own son. This ought to have withheld her hand; but the story is more interesting, by the violence of the struggle between resentment and maternal love:

Dona Deum templis nato victore ferebat;  
 Cum videt extinctos fratress Althea referri.  
 Quæ plangore dato, mœtis ululatibus urbem  
 Implet; et auratas mutavit vestibus atris.  
 At simul est auctor necis editus; excidit omnis  
 Luctus: et a lacrymis in pœnæ versus amorem est.  
 Stipes erat, quem, cum, partus enixa jaceret  
 Thestias in flammam triplices posuere sorores;  
 Staminaque impresso fatalia pollici nentes,  
 Tempora, dixerunt, eadem lignoque, tibi que,  
 O modo nate, damus. Quo postquam carmine dicta  
 Excessere deæ: flagrantem mater ab igne  
 Eripuit torrem: sparsitque liquentibus undis.  
 Ille diu furat penetralibus abditus imis;  
 Servatusque tuos, juvenis, servaverat annos.  
 Protulit hunc genitrix, tædæque in fragmina poni  
 Imperat; et positis inimicos admovet ignes.  
 Tum conata quater flammis imponere ramum,  
 Cœpta quater tenuit. Pugnat materque, sororque,  
 Et diversa trahunt unum due nomina pectus.  
 Sæpe metu sceleris pallebant ora futuri:  
 Sæpe suum fervens oculis debat ira ruborem,  
 Et modo nescio quid similis crudele minanti  
 Vultus erat; modo quem misereri credere posses:  
 Cumque serus lacrymas animi siccaverat ardor,  
 Inveniebantur lacrymæ tamen. Utque carina,  
 Quam ventus ventoque rapit contrarius æstus,  
 Vim geminam sentit, paretque incerta duobus:



Thestias haud aliter dubiis affectibus errat,  
 Inque vices ponit, positamque resuscitat iram.  
 Incipit esse tamen melior germana parente;  
 Et, consanguineas ut sanguine leniat umbras,  
 Impietate pia est. Nam postquam pestifer ignis  
 Convaluit; Kogus iste cremet mea viscera, dixit.  
 Utque manu dirâ lignum fatale tenebat;  
 Ante sepulchrales infelix adstitit aras.  
 Penarumque deæ triplicis furialibus, inquit,  
 Eumenides, sacris vultus advertite vestros.  
 Ulcisor, facioque nefas. Mors morte pianda est;  
 In scelus addendum scelus est, in funera funis:  
 Per coacervatos pereat domus impia luctus.  
 An felix Oeneus nato victore fruetur,  
 Thestius orbis erit? melius lugebitis ambo.  
 Vos modo, fraternal manes, animæque recentes,  
 Officium sentite meum; magnoque paratas  
 Accipite inferias, uteri mala pignora nostri.  
 Hei mihi! quo rapior? fratres ignoscite matri.  
 Deficiunt ad cæpta manus. Meruisse fatemur  
 Illum, cur pereat: mortis mihi displicet auctor.  
 Ergo impune feret; vivusque, et victor, et ipso  
 Successu tumidus regnum Calydonis habebit?  
 Vos cinis exiguus, gelidæque jacebitis umbræ?  
 Haud equidẽm patiar. Pereat sceleratus; et illa  
 Spemque patris, regnique trahat, patriæque ruinam,  
 Mens ubi materna est; ubi sunt pia jura parentum?  
 Et, quos sustinui, bis mensũm quinque labores?  
 O utinam primis arisses ignibus infans;  
 Idque ego passa forem! vixisti munere nostro:  
 Nunc merito moriẽre tuo. Cape præmia facti;  
 Bisque datam, primum partu, mox stipite raptu,  
 Redde animam; vel me fraternis adde sepulchris.  
 Et cupio, et nequeo. Quid agam? modo vulnera fratrum  
 Ante oculos mihi sunt, et tantæ cædis imago;  
 Nunc animum pietas, maternaque nomini frangunt.  
 Me miseram! male vincetis, sed vincite, fratres;  
 Dummodo, quæ dederò vobis solatia, vosque  
 Ipsa sequar, dixit: dextraque aversa trementi  
 Funereum torrem medios conjecit in ignes.  
 Aut dedit, aut visus gemitus est ille dedisse,  
 Stipes; et invitis correptus ab ignibus arsit.

*Metamorph. lib. viii. l. 445.*

In cases of this kind, one circumstance always  
 augments the fluctuation: after balancing between



two actions, a resolution to prefer one of them is an inchoated gratification of the prevailing passion, which moderates it in some degree; and that circumstance tends to give a superiority to the opposite passion: another circumstance also concurs, that this opposite passion has, by restraint, acquired in the interim some additional force.

Love and jealousy connected by a common object, occupy the mind alternately: when the object is considered as beautiful, love prevails; when considered as possibly unfaithful, jealousy prevails. A situation of that kind affords great scope for fluctuation of passion; which is painted to the life by several masterly hands in words as well as in colours. Shakspeare handles the same subject, but in a manner uncommon, and peculiar to himself: in Othello's soliloquy, before putting his wife to death, love and jealousy are represented, each exerting its whole force, but without any struggle; Othello was naturally inflexible: and the tenderest love could not divert him from a purpose he approved as right, not even for a moment: but every thing consistent with such a character is done to reconcile the two opposite passions; he is resolved to put her to death, but he will not shed her blood, nor so much as ruffle her skin:

*Othello.* It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul;—  
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!  
It is the cause:—Yet I'll not shed her blood,  
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,  
And smooth as monumental alabaster.

[Lays down the sword.]

Yet she must die; else she'll betray more men.  
Put out the light, and then—Put out the light!—  
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,  
I can again thy former light restore,  
Should I repent: but once put out thy light,  
'Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,



I know not where is that Promethean heat  
That can thy light reluminate.—[*Sets down the taper.*  
When I have pluck'd thy rose,  
I cannot give it vital growth again ;  
It needs must wither.—I'll smell thee on the tree :

[*Kissing her.*

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade  
Justice to break her sword!—One more ; one more ;  
Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,  
And love thee after.—One more, that's the last ;  
So sweet was ne'er so fatal ! I must weep,  
But they are cruel tears ! this sorrow's heavenly ;  
It strikes where it doth love.—

*Act V. Sc. 6.*

In Otway's *Orphan*, we have an illustrious example of the address employed to gratify opposite passions directed to the same object. Castalio and Polydore, brothers and rivals, had sworn mutual confidence : Castalio broke his faith by a private marriage ; which unwarily betrayed Polydore into a dismal deed, that of polluting his brother's bed. Thus he had injured his brother, and was injured by him : justice prompted him to make full atonement by his own death ; resentment against his brother, required a full atonement to be made to himself. In co-existent passions so contradictory, one of them commonly prevails after a struggle ; but here happily an expedient occurred to Polydore for gratifying both ; which was, that he should provoke his brother to put him to death. Polydore's crime, in his own opinion, merited that punishment ; and justice was satisfied when he fell by the hand of the man he had injured : he wanted at the same time to punish his brother for breach of faith ; and he could not punish more effectually than by betraying his brother to be his executioner.

If difference of aim prevent the union of two passions, though having the same object ; much more will it prevent their union, when their ob-



jects are also different: in both cases there is a fluctuation; but in the latter the fluctuation is slower than in the former. A beautiful situation of that kind is exhibited in the *Cid* of Corneille. Don Diegue, an old soldier worn out with age, having received a mortal affront from the Count, father to Chimene, employs his son, Don Rodrigue, Chimene's lover, to demand satisfaction. This situation occasions in the breast of Don Rodrigue a cruel struggle between love and honour, one of which must be sacrificed. The scene is finely conducted, chiefly by making love in some degree take part with honour, Don Rodrigue reflecting, that if he lost his honour he could not deserve his mistress: honour triumphs; and the Count provoked to a single combat, falls by the hand of Don Rodrigue.

This produceth another beautiful situation respecting Chimene, which making part of the same story, is placed here, though it properly belongs to the foregoing head. It became the duty of that lady to demand justice against her lover, for whose preservation, in other circumstances, she cheerfully would have sacrificed her own life. The struggle between these opposite passions directed to the same object, is finely expressed in the third scene of the third act:

*Elvire.* Il vous prive d'un père, et vous l'aimez encore !

*Chimene.* C'est peu de dire aimer. Elvire, je l'adore ;

Ma passion s'oppose à mon ressentiment,

Dedans mon ennemi je trouve mon amant,

Et je sens qu'en dépit de toute ma colère,

Rodrigue dans mon cœur combat encore mon père.

Il l'attaque, il le presse, il cède, il se défend,

Tantôt fort, tantôt foible, et tantôt triomphant ;

Mais en ce dur combat de colère et de flamme,

Il déchire mon cœur sans partager mon ame,

Et quoique mon amour ait sur moi de pouvoir,



Je ne consulte point pour suivre mon devoir.  
Je cours sans balancer où mon honneur m'oblige ;  
Rodrigue m'est bien cher, son intérêt m'afflige,  
Mon cœur prend son parti ; mais malgré son effort,  
Je sai que je suis, et que mon père est mort.

Not less when the objects are different than when the same, are means sometimes afforded to gratify both passions ; and such means are greedily embraced. In Tasso's *Gerusalemme*, Edward and Gildippe, husband and wife, are introduced fighting gallantly against the Saracens : Gildippe receives a mortal wound by the hand of Soliman : Edward inflamed with revenge, as well as concern for Gildippe, is agitated between the two different objects. The poet\* describes him endeavouring to gratify both at once, applying his right hand against Soliman, the object of his resentment, and his left hand to support his wife, the object of his love.

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## PART V.

### INFLUENCE OF PASSION WITH RESPECT TO OUR PERCEPTIONS, OPINIONS, AND BELIEF.

CONSIDERING how intimately our perceptions, passions, and actions are mutually connected, it would be wonderful if they should have no mutual influence. That our actions are too much influenced by passion, is a known truth ; but it is not less certain, though not so well known, that pas-

\* Canto XX. st. 97.



sion hath also an influence upon our perceptions, opinions and belief. For example, the opinions we form of men and things, are generally directed by affection: an advice given by a man of figure, hath great weight; the same advice from one in a low condition is despised or neglected; a man of courage underrates danger; and to the indolent the slightest obstacle appears insurmountable.

This doctrine is of great use in logic; and of still greater use in criticism, by serving to explain several principles of the fine arts that will be unfolded in the course of this work. A few general observations shall at present suffice, leaving the subject to be prosecuted more particularly afterward when occasion offers.

There is no truth more universally known, than that tranquillity and sedateness are the proper state of mind for accurate perception and cool deliberation; and for that reason, we never regard the opinion even of the wisest man, when we discover prejudice or passion behind the curtain. Passion, as observed above\* hath such influence over us, as to give a false light to all its objects. Agreeable passions prepossesses the mind in favour of their objects, and disagreeable passions, no less against their objects: a woman is all perfection in her lover's opinion, while in the eye of a rival beauty, she is awkward and disagreeable: when the passion of love is gone, beauty vanishes with it,—nothing left of that genteel motion, that sprightly conversation, those numberless graces, which formerly, in the lover's opinion, charmed all hearts. To a zealot every one of his own sect is a saint, while the most upright of a different sect are to him children of perdition: the talent of speaking



in a friend is more regarded than prudent conduct in any other. Nor will this surprise one acquainted with the world: our opinions, the result frequently of various and complicated views, are commonly so slight and wavering, as readily to be susceptible of a bias from passion.

With that natural bias another circumstance concurs, to give passion an undue influence on our opinions and belief; and that is a strong tendency in our nature to justify our passions as well as our actions, not to others only, but even to ourselves. That tendency is peculiarly remarkable with respect to disagreeable passions: by its influence, objects are magnified or lessened, circumstances supplied or suppressed, every thing coloured and disguised, to answer the end of justification. Hence the foundation of self-deceit, where a man imposes upon himself innocently, and even without suspicion of a bias.

There are subordinate means that contribute to pervert the judgment, and to make us form opinions contrary to truth; of which I shall mention two. First, it was formerly observed,\* that though ideas seldom start up in the mind without connexion, yet that ideas suited to the present tone of mind are readily suggested by any slight connexion; the arguments for a favourite opinion are always at hand, while we often search in vain for those that cross our inclination. Second, The mind taking delight in agreeable circumstances or arguments, is deeply impressed with them; while those that are disagreeable are hurried over so as scarce to make an impression: the same argument, by being relished or not relished, weighs so differently, as in truth to make conviction depend more

\* Chapter I.



on passion than on reasoning. This observation is fully justified by experience: to confine myself to a single instance; the numberless absurd religious tenets that at different times have pestered the world, would be altogether unaccountable but for that irregular bias of passion.

We proceed to a more pleasant task, which is, to illustrate the foregoing observations by proper examples. Gratitude, when warm, is often exerted upon the children of the benefactor; especially where he is removed out of reach by death or absence.\* The passion in this case being exerted for the sake of the benefactor, requires no peculiar excellence in his children: but the practice of doing good to these children produces affection for them, which never fails to advance their own esteem. By such means, strong connexions of affection are often formed among individuals, upon the slight foundation now mentioned.

Envy is a passion, which, being altogether unjustifiable, cannot be excused but by disguising it under some plausible name. At the same time, no passion is more eager than envy, to give its object a disagreeable appearance: it magnifies every bad quality, and fixes on the most humbling circumstances:

*Cassius.* I cannot tell what you and other men  
Think of this life; but for my single self,  
I had as lief not be, as live to be  
In awe of such a thing as I, myself.  
I was born free as Cæsar, so were you;  
We both have fed as well; and we can both  
Endure the winter's cold as well as he.  
For once, upon a raw and gusty day,  
The troubled Tyber chafing with his shores,  
Cæsar says to me, Dar'st thou, Cassius, now

\* See part I. sect. 1. of the present chapter.



Leap in with me into this angry flood,  
And swim to yonder point?—Upon the word;  
Accoutred as I was, I plunged in,  
And bid him follow; so indeed he did.  
The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it,  
With lusty sinews; throwing it aside,  
And stemming it with hearts of controversy.  
But ere we could arrive the point propos'd,  
Cæsar cry'd, Help me, Cassius, or I sink.  
I, as Æneas, our great ancestor,  
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder  
The old Anchises bear; so from the waves of Tyber  
Did I the tired Cæsar: and this man  
Is now become a god, and Cassius is  
A wretched creature and must bend his body,  
If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.  
He had a fever when he was in Spain,  
And when the fit was on him, I did mark  
How he did shake. 'Tis true this god did shake;  
His coward lips did from their colour fly,  
And that same eye whose bend doth awe the world,  
Did lose its lustre; I did hear him groan;  
Ay, and that tongue of his, that bade the Romans  
Mark him, and write his speeches in their books,  
Alas! it cry'd—Give me some drink, Titinius,—  
As a sick girl. Ye gods, it doth amaze me,  
A man of such a feeble temper should  
So get a start of this majestic world,  
And bear the palm alone.

*Julius Cæsar, Act I. Sc. 8.*

Glo'ster, inflamed with resentment against his son Edgar, could even force himself into a momentary conviction that they were not related:

O strange fasten'd villain!  
Would he deny his letter?—I never got him.

*King Lear, Act II. Sc. 3*

When by great sensibility of heart, or other means, grief becomes immoderate, the mind, in order to justify itself, is prone to magnify the cause: and if the real cause admit not of being magnified,



the mind seeks a cause for its grief in imagined future events :

*Busby.* Madam, your Majesty is much too sad ;  
You promis'd when you parted with the King,  
To lay aside self-harming heaviness,  
And entertain a cheerfull disposition.

*Queen.* To please the King, I did ; to please myself,  
I cannot do it. Yet I know no cause  
Why I should welcome such a guest as grief ;  
Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest  
As my sweet Richard : yet again, methinks,  
Some unborn sorrow, ripe in Fortune's womb,  
Is coming tow'rd me ; and my inward soul  
With something trembles, yet at nothing grieves,  
More than with parting from my lord the King.

*Richard II. Act II. Sc. 5*

Resentment at first is vented on the relations of the offender, in order to punish him : but as resentment, when so outrageous, is contrary to conscience, the mind, to justify its passion, is disposed to paint these relations in the blackest colours ; and it comes at last to be convinced, that they ought to be punished for their own demerits.

Anger raised by an accidental stroke upon a tender part of the body, is sometimes vented upon the undesigning cause. But as the passion in that case is absurd, and as there can be no solid gratification in punishing the innocent ; the mind, prone to justify as well as to gratify its passion, deludes itself into a conviction of the action's being voluntary. The conviction, however, is but momentary : the first reflection shows it to be erroneous ; and the passion vanisheth almost instantaneously with the conviction. But anger, the most violent of all passions, has still greater influence : it sometimes forces the mind to personify a stock or a stone, if it happen to occasion bodily pain, and even to believe it a voluntary agent, in order to be



a proper object of resentment. And that we have really a momentary conviction of its being a voluntary agent, must be evident from considering, that, without such conviction, the passion can neither be justified nor gratified: the imagination can give no aid; for a stock or a stone imagined sensible, cannot be an object of punishment, if the mind be conscious that it is an imagination merely without any reality. Of such personification, involving a conviction of reality, there is one illustrious instance: when the first bridge of boats over the Hellespont was destroyed by a storm, Xerxes fell into a transport of rage, so excessive, that he commanded the sea to be punished with 300 stripes; and a pair of fetters to be thrown into it, enjoining the following words to be pronounced: "O thou salt and bitter water! thy master hath condemned thee to this punishment for offending him without cause: and is resolved to pass over thee in despite of thy insolence: with reason all men neglect to sacrifice to thee, because thou art both disagreeable and treacherous."\*

Shakespeare exhibits beautiful examples of the irregular influence of passion in making us believe things to be otherwise than they are. King Lear, in his distress, personifies the rain; wind, and thunder; and, in order to justify his resentment, believes them to be taking part with his daughters:

*Lear.* Rumble thy bellyful; spit fire, spout rain!  
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters.  
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;  
I never gave you kingdoms, call'd you children;  
You owe me no subscription. Then let fall  
Your horrible pleasure.—Here I stand, your slave;

\* Herodotus, book vii.



A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man!  
 But yet I call you servile ministers,  
 That have with two pernicious daughters join'd  
 Your high-engender'd battles, 'gainst a head  
 So old and white as this. Oh! oh! 'tis foul!

*Act III. Sc. 2.*

**King Richard**, full of indignation against his favourite horse for carrying Bolingbroke, is led into the conviction of his being rational :

*Groom.* O, how it yearn'd my heart, when I beheld  
 In London streets that coronation-day,  
 When Bolingbroke rode on Roan Barbary,  
 That horse that thou so often hast bestrid,  
 That horse that I so carefully have dress'd.

*K. Rich.* Rode he on Barbary? tell me gentle friend,  
 How went he under him?

*Groom.* So proudly as he had disdain'd the ground.

*K. Rich.* So proud that Bolingbroke was on his back!  
 That jade had eat bread from my royal hand.  
 This hand hath made him proud with clapping him.  
 Would he not stumble? would he not fall down,  
 (Since pride must have a fall,) and break the neck  
 Of that proud man that did usurp his back?

*Richard II. Act V. Sc. 11.*

**Hamlet**, swelled with indignation at his mother's second marriage, was strongly inclined to lessen the time of her widowhood, the shortness of the time being a violent circumstance against her; and he deludes himself by degrees into the opinion of an interval shorter than the real one:

*Hamlet.* ——— That it should come to this!  
 But two months dead! nay, not so much; not two;—  
 So excellent a king, that was, to this,  
 Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,  
 That he permitted not the winds of heav'n  
 Visit her face too roughly. Heav'n and earth!  
 Must I remember—why, she would hang on him,  
 As if increase of appetite had grown



By what it fed on; yet, within a month,——  
 Let me not think—Frailty thy name is *Woman*!  
 A little month! or ere these shoes were old,  
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,  
 Like Niobe, all tears——Why she, ev'n she——  
 (O heav'n! a beast that wants discourse of reason,  
 Would have mourn'd longer)—married with mine uncle,  
 My father's brother; but no more like my father,  
 Than I to Hercules. Within a month!——  
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
 Had left the flushing in her gauled eyes,  
 She married——Oh, most wicked speed, to post  
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!  
 It is not, nor it cannot come to good.  
 But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

*Act I. Sc. 3.*

The power of passion to falsify the computation of time is remarkable in this instance; because time, which hath an accurate measure, is less obsequious to our desires and wishes, than objects which have no precise standard of less or more.

Good news is greedily swallowed upon very slender evidence: our wishes magnify the probability of the event, as well as the veracity of the relater; and we believe as certain, what at best is doubtful:

Quel, che l'huom vede, amor li fa invisibile  
 El l'invisibil fa veder amore  
 Questo creduto fu, che 'l miser suole  
 Dar facile credenza a' quel, che vuole.

*Orland. Furios. cant. i. st. 56.*

For the same reason, bad news gains also credit upon the slightest evidence: fear, if once alarmed, has the same effect with hope, to magnify every circumstance that tends to conviction. Shakspeare, who shows more knowledge of human nature than any of our philosophers, hath in his *Cymbeline*\*

\* Act II. Sc. 6.



represented this bias of the mind; for he makes the person who alone was affected with the bad news, yield to evidence that did not convince any of his companions. And Othello\* is convinced of his wife's infidelity from circumstances too slight to move any person less interested.

If the news interest us in so low a degree as to give place to reason, the effect will not be altogether the same: judging of the probability or improbability of the story, the mind settles in a rational conviction either that it is true or not. But, even in that case, the mind is not allowed to rest in that degree of conviction which is produced by rational evidence: if the news be in any degree favourable, our belief is raised by hope to an improper height; and if unfavourable, by fear.

This observation holds equally with respect to future events: if a future event be either much wished or dreaded, the mind never fails to augment the probability beyond truth.

That easiness of belief with respect to wonders and prodigies, even the most absurd and ridiculous, is a strange phenomenon; because nothing can be more evident than the following proposition, that the more singular any event is, the more evidence is required to produce belief; a familiar event daily occurring, being in itself extremely probable, finds ready credit, and therefore is vouched by the slightest evidence; but to overcome the improbability of a strange and rare event, contrary to the course of nature, the very strongest evidence is required. It is certain, however, that wonders and prodigies are swallowed by the vulgar, upon evidence that would not be sufficient to ascertain the most familiar occurrence. It has been reckoned difficult to

\* Act III. Sc. 8



explain that irregular bias of mind; but we are now made acquainted with the influence of passion upon opinion and belief: a story of ghosts or fairies, told with an air of gravity and truth, raiseth an emotion of wonder, and perhaps of dread; and these emotions imposing upon a weak mind, impress upon it a thorough conviction contrary to reason.

Opinion and belief are influenced by propensity as well as by passion. An innate propensity is all we have to convince us, that the operations of nature are uniform: influenced by that propensity, we often rashly think, that good or bad weather will never have an end; and in natural philosophy, writers, influenced by the same propensity, stretch commonly their analogical reasonings beyond just bounds.

Opinion and belief are influenced by affection as well as by propensity. The noted story of a fine lady and a curate viewing the moon through a telescope, is a pleasant illustration: I perceive, says the lady, two shadows inclining to each other; they are certainly two happy lovers: Not at all, replies the curate, they are two steeples of a cathedral.

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#### APPENDIX TO PART V.

*Methods that Nature hath afforded for computing Time and Space.*

THIS subject is introduced, because it affords several curious examples of the influence of passion to bias the mind in its conceptions and opinions; a lesson that cannot be too frequently inculcated, as



there is not, perhaps, another bias in human nature that hath an influence so universal to make us wander from truth as well as from justice.

I begin with time ; and the question is, What was the measure of time before artificial measures were invented ; and what is the measure at present, when these are not at hand ? I speak not of months and days, which are computed by the moon and sun ; but of hours, or in general of the time that passes between any two occurrences when there is not access to the sun. The only natural measure is the succession of our thoughts ; for we always judge the time to be long or short, in proportion to the number of perceptions and ideas that have passed during that interval. This measure is indeed far from being accurate ; because in a quick and in a slow succession, it must evidently produce different computations of the same time : but, however inaccurate, it is the only measure by which we naturally calculate time ; and that measure is applied, on all occasions, without regard to any casual variation in the rate of succession.

That measure would, however be tolerable, did it labour under no other imperfection beside that mentioned : but in many instances it is much more fallacious ; in order to explain which distinctly, an analysis will be necessary. Time is computed at two different periods ; one while it is passing, another after it is past : these computations shall be considered separately, with the errors to which each of them is liable. Beginning with computation of time while it is passing, it is a common and trite observation, That to lovers absence appears immeasurably long, every minute an hour, and every day a year : the same computation is made in every case where we long for a distant event ; as where one is in expectation of good news, or where



a profligate heir watches for the death of an old rich miser. Opposite to these are instances not fewer in number: to a criminal the interval between sentence and execution appears wofully short: and the same holds in every case where one dreads an approaching event; of which even a school-boy can bear witness: the hour allowed him for play, moves, in his apprehension, with a very swift pace; before he is thoroughly engaged, the hour is gone. A computation founded on the number of ideas, will never produce estimates so regularly opposite to each other; for our wishes do not produce a slow succession of ideas, nor our fears a quick succession. What then moves nature, in the cases mentioned, to desert her ordinary measure for one very different? I know not that this question ever has been resolved; the false estimates I have suggested being so common and familiar, that no writer has thought of their cause. And, indeed, to enter upon this matter without preparation, might occasion some difficulty: to encounter which we luckily are prepared, by what is said upon the power of passion to bias the mind in its perceptions and opinions. Among the circumstances that terrify a condemned criminal, the short time he has to live is one; which time, by the influence of terror, is made to appear still shorter than it is in reality. In the same manner, among the distresses of an absent lover, the time of separation is a capital circumstance, which for that reason is greatly magnified by his anxiety and impatience: he imagines that the time of meeting comes on very slow, or rather that it will never come: every minute is thought of an intolerable length. Here is a fair, and, I hope, satisfactory reason, why time is thought to be tedious when we long for a future event, and not less fleet when we dread



the event. The reason is confirmed by other instances. Bodily pain, fixed to one part, produceth a slow train of perceptions, which, according to the common measure of time, ought to make it appear short: yet we know, that, in such a state, time has the opposite appearance; and the reason is, that bodily pain is always attended with a degree of impatience, which makes us think every minute to be an hour. The same holds where the pain shifts from place to place; but not so remarkably, because such a pain is not attended with the same degree of impatience. The impatience a man hath in travelling through a barren country, or in a bad road, makes him think, during the journey, that time goes on with a very slow pace. We shall see afterward, that a very different computation is made when the journey is over.

How ought it to stand with a person who apprehends bad news? It will probably be thought that the case of this person resembles that of a criminal, who, terrified at his approaching execution, believes every hour to be but a minute: yet the computation is directly opposite. Reflecting upon the difficulty, there appears one capital distinguishing circumstance: the fate of the criminal is determined; in the case under consideration, the person is still in suspense. Every one has felt the distress that accompanies suspense: we wish to get rid of it at any rate, even at the expense of bad news. This case, therefore, upon a more narrow inspection, resembles that of bodily pain: the present distress, in both cases, makes the time appear extremely tedious.

The reader probably will not be displeased, to have this branch of the subject illustrated, by an author who is acquainted with every maze of the human heart, and who bestows ineffable grace and ornament upon every subject he handles:



*Rosalinda.* I pray you, what is't a-clock?

*Orlando.* You should ask me, what time o'day; there's no clock in the forest.

*Ros.* Then there is no true lover in the forest; else, sighing every minute, and groaning every hour, would detect the lazy foot of Time, as well as a clock.

*Orla.* Why not the swift foot of Time? Had not that been as proper?

*Ros.* By no means, Sir. Time travels in diverse paces with diverse persons. I'll tell you who Time ambles withal, who Time trots withal, who Time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal.

*Orla.* I prythee, whom doth he trot withal?

*Ros.* Marry, he trots hard with a young maid between the contract of her marriage and the day it is solemnised: if the interim be but a se'ennight, Time's pace is so hard, that it seems the length of seven years.

*Orla.* Who ambles Time withal?

*Ros.* With a priest that lacks Latin, and a rich man that hath not the gout: for the one sleeps easily, because he cannot study; and the other lives merrily, because he feels no pain: the one, lacking the burthen of lean and wasteful learning: the other knowing no burthen of heavy tedious penury. These Time ambles withal.

*Orla.* Whom doth he gallop withal?

*Ros.* With a thief to the gallows: for, tho' he go as softly as foot can fall, he thinks himself too soon there.

*Orla.* Whom stays it still withal?

*Ros.* With lawyers in the vacation: for they sleep between term and term, and then they perceive not how Time moves.

*As you like it, Act III. Sc. 8.*

The natural method of computing present time, shows how far from the truth we may be led by the irregular influence of passion: nor are our eyes immediately opened when the scene is past; for the deception continues while there remain any traces of the passion. But looking back upon past time when the joy or distress is no longer remembered, the computation is very different: in that condition we coolly and deliberately make use of the ordinary measure, namely, the course of our perceptions. And I shall now proceed to the er-



rors that this measure is subjected to. Here we must distinguish between a train of perceptions, and a train of ideas: real objects make a strong impression, and are faithfully remembered: ideas, on the contrary, however entertaining at the time, are apt to escape a subsequent recollection. Hence it is, that in retrospection, the time that was employed upon real objects, appears longer than that employed upon ideas: the former are more accurately recollected than the latter; and we measure the time by the number that is recollected. This doctrine shall be illustrated by examples. After finishing a journey through a populous country, the frequency of agreeable objects distinctly recollected by the traveller, makes the time spent in the journey appear to him longer than it was in reality; which is chiefly remarkable in the first journey, when every object is new, and makes a strong impression. On the other hand, after finishing a journey through a barren country thinly peopled, the time appears short, being measured by the number of objects, which were few, and far from interesting. Here in both instances a computation is made, directly opposite to that made during the journey. And this, by the way, serves to account for what may appear singular, that, in a barren country, a computed mile is always longer, than near the capital, where the country is rich and populous: the traveller has no natural measure of the miles he has travelled, other than the time bestowed upon the journey; nor any natural measure of the time, other than the number of his perceptions: now these, being few from the paucity of objects in a waste country, lead him to compute that the time has been short, and consequently that the miles have been few: by the same method of computation, the great number of perceptions, from the



quantity of objects in a populous country, make the traveller conjecture that the time has been long, and the miles many. The last step of the computation is obvious: in estimating the distance of one place from another, if the miles be reckoned few in number, each mile must of course be long; if many in number, each must be short.

Again, the travelling with an agreeable companion, produceth a short computation both of the road and of time; especially if there be few objects that demand attention, or if the objects be familiar: and the case is the same of young people at a ball, or of a joyous company over a bottle: the ideas with which they have been entertained, being transitory, escape the memory: after the journey and the entertainment are over, they reflect that they have been much diverted; but scarce can say about what.

When one is totally occupied with any agreeable work that admits not many objects, time runs on without observation: and upon a subsequent recollection, must appear short, in proportion to the paucity of objects. This is still more remarkable in close contemplation and in deep thinking, where the train, composed wholly of ideas, proceeds with an extreme slow pace: not only are the ideas few in number, but are apt to escape an after reckoning. The like false reckoning of time may proceed from an opposite state of mind: in a reverie, where ideas float at random without making any impression, time goes on unheeded, and the reckoning is lost. A reverie may be so profound as to prevent the recollection of any one idea: that the mind was busied in a train of thinking may in general be remembered: but what was the subject, has quite escaped the memory. In such a case we are altogether at a loss about the time, having no



*data* for making a computation. No cause produceth so false a reckoning of time as immoderate grief: the mind, in that state, is violently attached to a single object, and admits not a different thought: any other object breaking in, is instantly banished, so as scarce to give an appearance of succession. In a reverie, we are uncertain of the time that is past; but, in the example now given, there is an appearance of certainty, that the time must have been short, when the perceptions are so few in number.

The natural measure of space, appears more obscure than that of time. I venture, however, to mention it, leaving it to be further prosecuted, if it be thought of any importance.

The space marked out for a house appears considerably larger after it is divided into its proper parts. A piece of ground appears larger after it is surrounded with a fence; and still larger when it is made a garden and divided into different compartments.

On the contrary, a large plain looks less after it is divided into parts. The sea must be excepted, which looks less from that very circumstance of not being divided into parts.

A room of a moderate size appears larger when properly furnished. But, when a very large room is furnished, I doubt whether it be not lessened in appearance.

A room of a moderate size looks less by having a ceiling lower than in proportion. The same low ceiling makes a very large room look larger than it is in reality.

These experiments are by far too small a stock for a general theory: but they are all that occur at present; and, instead of a regular system, I have nothing for the reader's instruction but a few conjectures.



The largest angle of vision seems to be the natural measure of space : the eye is the only judge ; and in examining with it the size of any plain, or the length of any line, the most accurate method that can be taken is, to run over the object in parts : the largest part that can be seen with one stedfast look, determines the largest angle of vision ; and, when that angle is given, one may institute a calculation, by trying with the eye how many of these parts are in the whole.

Whether this angle be the same in all men, I know not : the smallest angle of vision is ascertained ; and to ascertain the largest, would not be less curious.

But supposing it known, it would be a very imperfect measure ; perhaps more so than the natural measure of time : for it requires great steadiness of eye to measure a line with any accuracy, by applying it to the largest angle of distinct vision. And supposing that steadiness to be acquired by practice, the measure will be imperfect from other circumstances. The space comprehended under this angle will be different according to the distance, and also according to the situation of the object : of a perpendicular this angle will comprehend the smallest space ; the space will be larger in looking upon an inclined plain ; and will be larger or less, in proportion to the degree of inclination.

This measure of space, like the measure of time, is liable to several errors, from certain operations of the mind, which will account for some of the erroneous judgments above mentioned. The space marked out for a dwelling-house, where the eye is at any reasonable distance, is seldom greater than can be seen at once, without moving the head : divide that space into two or three equal parts, and



none of these parts will appear much less than what can be comprehended at one distinct look; consequently each of them will appear equal, or nearly equal, to what the whole did before the division. If, on the other hand, the whole be very small, so as scarce to fill the eye at one look, its division into parts will, I conjecture, make it appear still less: the minuteness of the parts is, by an easy transition of ideas, transferred to the whole: and we pass the same judgment on the latter that we do on the former.

The space marked out for a small garden is surveyed almost at one view; and requires a motion of the eye so slight, as to pass for an object that can be comprehended under the largest angle of distinct vision: if not divided into too many parts, we are apt to form the same judgment of each part, and consequently to magnify the garden in proportion to the number of its parts.

A very large plain without protuberances is an object no less rare than beautiful; and in those who see it for the first time, it must produce an emotion of wonder. That emotion, however slight, imposes on the mind, and makes it judge that the plain is larger than it is in reality. Divide the plain into parts, and our wonder ceases; it is no longer considered as one great plain, but as so many different fields or enclosures.

The first time one beholds the sea, it appears to be large beyond all bounds. When it becomes familiar, and ceases to raise our wonder, it appears less than it is in reality. In a storm it appears large, being distinguishable by the rolling waves into a number of great parts. Islands scattered at considerable distances, add in appearance to its size: each intercepted part looks extremely large, and we insensibly apply arithmetic to increase the ap-



pearance of the whole. Many islands scattered at hand, give a diminutive appearance to the sea, by its connexion with its diminutive parts: the Lomond lake would undoubtedly look larger without its islands.

Furniture increaseth in appearance the size of a small room, for the same reason that divisions increase in appearance the size of a garden. The emotion of wonder which is raised by a very large room without furniture, makes it look larger than it is in reality: if completely furnished, we view it in parts, and our wonder is not raised.

A low ceiling hath a diminutive appearance, which, by an easy transition of ideas, is communicated to the length and breadth, provided they bear any proportion to the height. If they be out of all proportion, the opposition seizes the mind, and raises some degree of wonder, which makes the difference appear greater than it really is.

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## PART VI.

### THE RESEMBLANCE OF EMOTIONS TO THEIR CAUSES.

THAT many emotions have some resemblance to their causes, is a truth that can be made clear by induction; though, as far as I know, the observation has not been made by any writer. Motion, in its different circumstances, is productive of feelings that resemble it; sluggish motion, for example, causeth a languid unpleasant feeling; slow uniform motion, a feeling calm and pleasant; and brisk motion, a lively feeling that rouses the spirits, and



promotes activity. A fall of water through rocks, raises in the mind a tumultuous confused agitation, extremely similar to its cause. When force is exerted with any effort, the spectator feels a similar effort, as of force exerted within his mind. A large object swells in the heart. An elevated object makes the spectator stand erect.

Sounds also produce emotions, or feelings that resemble them. A sound in a low key brings down the mind : such a sound in a full tone hath a certain solemnity, which it communicates to the feeling produced by it. A sound in a high key cheers the mind by raising it : such a sound in a full tone both elevates and swells the mind.

Again, a wall or pillar, that declines from the perpendicular, produceth a painful feeling, as of a tottering and falling within the mind : and a feeling somewhat similar is produced by a tall pillar that stands so ticklish as to look like falling.\* A column with a base looks more firm and stable than upon the naked ground ; and for that reason is more agreeable : and though the cylinder is a more beautiful figure, yet the cube for a base is preferred ; its angles being extended to a greater distance from the centre than the circumference of a cylinder. This excludes not a different reason, that the base, the shaft, and the capital of a pillar, ought, for the sake of variety, to differ from each other : if the shaft be round, the base and capital ought to be square.

A constrained posture, uneasy to the man himself, is disagreeable to the spectator ; whence a rule in painting, that the drapery ought not to ad-

\* Sunt enim Tempe saltus transitu difficilis : nam præter angustias per quinque millia, qua exiguum jumento onusto iter est, rupes utrinque ita abscissæ sunt, ut despici vix sine vertigine quadam simul oculorum animique possit. *Titus Livius, lib. xliv. sect. 6.*



here to the body, but hang loose, that the figures may appear easy and free in their movements. The constrained posture of a French dancing master in one of Hogarth's pieces, is for that reason disagreeable ; and it is also ridiculous, because the constraint is assumed as a grace.

The foregoing observation is not confined to emotions, or feelings raised by still life : it holds also in what are raised by the qualities, actions, and passions of a sensible being. Love, inspired by a fine woman, assumes her qualities : it is sublime, soft, tender, severe or gay, according to its cause. This is still more remarkable in emotions raised by human actions : it hath already been remarked,\* that any single instance of gratitude, beside procuring esteem for the author, raiseth in the spectator a vague emotion of gratitude, which disposeth him to be grateful ; and I now further remark, that this vague emotion hath a strong resemblance to its cause, namely, the passion that produced the grateful action : courage exerted inspires the reader as well as the spectator with a like emotion of courage ; a just action fortifies our love of justice, and a generous action rouses our generosity. In short, with respect to all virtuous actions, it will be found by induction, that they lead us to imitation, by inspiring emotions resembling the passions that produceth these actions. And hence the advantage of choice books and choice company.

Grief as well as joy are infectious : the emotions they raise in a spectator resemble them perfectly. Fear is equally infectious : and hence in an army, a few taking fright, even without cause, spread the infection till it becomes an universal panic. Pity is similar to its cause ; a parting scene be-



tween lovers or friends, produceth in the spectator a sort of pity, which is tender like the distress: the anguish of remorse produceth pity of a harsh kind; and if the remorse be extreme, the pity hath a mixture of horror. Anger I think is singular; for even where it is moderate, and causeth no disgust, it disposes not the spectator to anger in any degree.\* Covetousness, cruelty, treachery, and other vicious passions, are so far from raising any emotion similar to themselves, to incite a spectator to imitation, that they have an opposite effect: they raise abhorrence, and fortify the spectator in his aversion to such actions. When anger is immoderate, it cannot fail to produce the same effect.

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## PART VII.

### FINAL CAUSES OF THE MORE FREQUENT EMOTIONS AND PASSIONS.

It is a law in our nature, that we never act but by the impulse of desire: which in other words is saying, that passion, by the desire included in it, is what determines the will. Hence in the conduct of life, it is of the utmost importance, that our passions be directed to proper objects, tend to just and rational ends, and with relation to each other, be duly balanced. The beauty of contrivance, so conspicuous in the human frame, is not confined to the rational part of our nature, but is visible over the whole. Concerning the passions in particular,

\* Aristotle, *Poet.* cap. xviii. sect. 3. says, that anger raiseth in the spectator a similar emotion of anger.



however irregular, headstrong, and perverse, in a slight view, they may appear, I hope to demonstrate, that they are by nature modelled and tempered with perfect wisdom, for the good of society as well as for private good. The subject, treated at large, would be too extensive for the present work : all there is room for are a few general observations upon the sensitive part of our nature, without regarding that strange irregularity of passion discovered in some individuals. Such topical irregularities, if I may use the term, cannot fairly be held an objection to the present theory : we are frequently, it is true, misled by inordinate passion ; but we are also, and perhaps no less frequently, misled by wrong judgment.

In order to fulfil my engagement, it must be premised, that an agreeable cause produceth always a pleasant emotion ; and a disagreeable cause, a painful emotion. This is a general law of nature which admits not a single exception : agreeableness in the cause is indeed so essentially connected with pleasure in the emotion, its effect, that an agreeable cause cannot be better defined, than by its power of producing a pleasant emotion : and disagreeableness in the cause has the same necessary connexion with pain in the emotion produced by it.

From this preliminary it appears, that in order to know for what end an emotion is made, pleasant or painful, we must begin with inquiring for what end its cause is made agreeable or disagreeable. And, with respect to inanimate objects, considered as the causes of emotions, many of them are made agreeable in order to promote our happiness ; and it proves invincibly the benignity of the Deity, that we are placed in the midst of objects for the most part agreeable. But that is not all : the bulk



of such objects being of real use in life, are made agreeable in order to excite our industry ; witness a large tree, a well dressed fallow, a rich field of grain, and others that may be named without end. On the other hand, it is not easy to specify a disagreeable object that is not at the same time hurtful : some things are made disagreeable, such as a rotten carcase, because they are noxious : others, a dirty marsh, for example, or a barren heath, are made disagreeable, in order, as above, to excite our industry. And, with respect to the few things that are neither agreeable nor disagreeable, it will be made evident, that their being left indifferent is not a work of chance but of wisdom : of such I shall have occasion to give several instances.

Because inanimate objects that are agreeable fix our attention, and draw us to them, they in that respect are termed *attractive* : such objects inspire pleasant emotions, which are gratified by adhering to the objects and enjoying them. Because disagreeable objects of the same kind repel us from them, they in that respect are termed *repulsive* : and the painful emotions raised by such objects are gratified by flying from them. Thus, in general, with respect to things inanimate, the tendency of every pleasant emotion is to prolong the pleasure ; and the tendency of every painful emotion is to end the pain.

Sensible beings considered as objects of passion, lead into a more complex theory. A sensible being that is agreeable by its attributes, inspires us with a pleasant emotion accompanied with desire ; and the question is, What is naturally the gratification of that desire ? Were man altogether selfish, his nature would lead him to indulge the pleasant emotion, without making any acknowledgment to the person who gives him pleasure, more than to a



pure air or temperate clime : but as man is endued with a principle of benevolence as well as of selfishness, he is prompted by his nature to desire the good of every sensible being that gives him pleasure ; and the happiness of that being is the gratification of his desire. The final cause of desire so directed is illustrious : it contributes to a man's own happiness, by affording him means of gratification beyond what selfishness can afford ; and, at the same time, it tends eminently to advance the happiness of others. This lays open a beautiful theory in the nature of man ; a selfish action can only benefit myself : a benevolent action benefits myself as much as it benefits others. In a word, benevolence may not improperly be said to be the most refined selfishness ; which, by the way, ought to silence certain shallow philosophers, who, ignorant of human nature, teach a disgusting doctrine. That to serve others, unless with a view to our own happiness is weakness and folly ; as if self-love only, and not benevolence, contributed our happiness. The hand of God is too visible in the human frame, to permit us to think seriously, that there ever can be any jarring or inconsistency among natural principles, those especially of self-love and benevolence, which govern the bulk of our actions.\*

\* With shallow thinkers, the selfish system naturally prevails in theory, I do not say in practice. During infancy, our desires centre mostly in ourselves : every one perceives intuitively the comfort of food and raiment, of a snug dwelling, and of every convenience. But that the doing good to others will make us happy, is not so evident ; feeding the hungry, for example, or clothing the naked. This truth is seen but obscurely by the gross of mankind, if at all seen : the superior pleasure that accompanies the exercise of benevolence, of friendship and of every social principle, is not clearly understood till it be frequently felt. To perceive the social principle in its triumphant state, a man must forget himself, and turn his thoughts upon the character and conduct of his fellow creatures : he will feel a secret charm in every passion that tends to the good of others, and a secret aversion



Next in order come sensible beings that are in distress. A person in distress, being so far a disagreeable object, must raise in a spectator a painful passion; and, were man purely a selfish being, he would desire to be relieved from that pain, by turning from the object. But the principle of benevolence gives an opposite direction to his desire: it makes him desire to afford relief; and by relieving the person from distress, his passion is gratified. The painful passion thus directed, is termed *sympathy*; which, though painful, is yet in its nature attractive. And, with respect to its final cause, we can be at no loss: it not only tends to relieve a fellow creature from distress, but in its gratification is greatly more pleasant than if it were repulsive.

We in the last place, bring under consideration persons hateful by vice or wickedness. Imagine a wretch who has lately perpetrated some horrid crime: he is disagreeable to every spectator; and consequently raiseth in every spectator a painful passion. What is the natural gratification of that passion? I must here again observe, that supposing man to be entirely a selfish being, he would be prompted by his nature to relieve himself from the pain, by averting his eye, and banishing the criminal from his thoughts. But man is not so constituted: he is composed of many principles, which, though seemingly contradictory, are perfectly concordant. His actions are influenced by the principle of benevolence, as well as by that of selfishness: and in order to answer the foregoing question, I must introduce a third principle, no less re-

against every unfeeling heart that is indifferent to the happiness and distress of others. In a word, it is but too common for men to indulge selfishness in themselves; but all men abhor it in others.



markable in its influence than either of these mentioned; it is that principle, common to all, which prompts us to punish those who do wrong. An envious, a malicious, or a cruel action, being disagreeable, raiseth in the spectator the painful emotion of resentment, which frequently swells into a passion; and the natural gratification of the desire included in that passion, is to punish the guilty person: I must chastise the wretch by indignation at least, and hatred, if not more severely. Here the final cause is self-evident.

An injury done to myself, touching me more than when done to others, raises my resentment to a higher degree. The desire, accordingly, included in this passion, is not satisfied with so slight a punishment as indignation or hatred: It is not fully gratified with retaliation; and the author must by my hand suffer mischief, as great at least as he has done to me. Neither can we be at any loss about the final cause of that higher degree of resentment: the whole vigour of the passion is required to secure individuals from the injustice and oppression of others.\*

A wicked or disgraceful action is disagreeable, not only to others, but even to the delinquent himself: and raises in both a painful emotion, including a desire of punishment. The painful emotion felt by the delinquent, is distinguished by the name of *remorse*; which naturally excites him to punish himself. There cannot be imagined a better contrivance to deter us from vice; for remorse itself is a severe punishment. That passion, and the desire of self-punishment derived from it, are touched delicately by Terence:

\* See Historical Law Tracts, tract 1.



*Menedemus.* Ubi comperi ex iis, qui ei fuere conscii,  
 Domum revortor mœstus, atque animo fere  
 Perturbato, atque incerto præ ægritudine :  
 Adsido, adcurrunt servi, soccos detrahunt :  
 Video alios festinare, lectos sternere,  
 Cœnam adparare : pro se quisque sedulo  
 Faciebat, quo illam mihi lenirent miseriam.  
 Ubi video hæc, cœpi cogitare : Hem ! tot mea,  
 Solius solliciti sint causa, ut me unum expleant ?  
 Ancillæ tot me vestiant ? sumptus domi  
 Tantos ego solus faciam ? sed gnatum unicum,  
 Quem pariter uti his decuit, aut etiam amplius,  
 Quod illa ætas magis ad hæc utenda idonea 'st,  
 Eum ego hinc ejici miserum injustitia mea.  
 Malo quidem me dignum quœvis deputem,  
 Si id faciam : nam usque dum ille vitam illam colet  
 Inopem, carens patria ob meas injurias,  
 Interea usque illi de me supplicium dabo :  
 Laborans, quærens, parcens, illia serviens.  
 Ita facio prorsus : nihil relinquo in ædibus,  
 Nec vas, nec vestimentum : contrahi omnia,  
 Ancillas, servos, nisi eos, qui opere rustico.  
 Faciundo facile sumptum exercerent suum :  
 Omnes produxi ac vendidi : inscripsi illico  
 Edes mercedē : quasi talenta ad quindecim  
 Coëgi : agrum hunc mercatus sum : hic me exerceo.  
 Decrevi tantisper me minus injuriæ,  
 Chreme, meo gnato facere, dum fiam miser :  
 Nec fas esse ulla me voluptate hic frui,  
 Nisi ubi ille huc salvos redierit meus particeps.

*Heautontimorumenos, Act I. Sc. 1.*

Otway reaches the same sentiment :

*Monimia.* Let mischiefs multiply ! let every hour  
 Of my loath'd life yield me increase of horror !  
 Oh let the sun to these unhappy eyes  
 Ne'er shine again, but be eclips'd for ever !  
 May every thing I look on seem a prodigy,  
 To fill my soul with terror, till I quite  
 Forget I ever had humanity,  
 And grow a curser of the works of nature !

*Orphan, Act IV.*

In the cases mentioned, benevolence alone, or  
 desire of punishment alone, governs without a ri-



val; and it was necessary to handle these cases separately, in order to elucidate a subject which by writers is left in great obscurity. But neither of these principles operates always without rivalry: cases may be figured, and cases actually exist, where the same person is an object both of sympathy and of punishment. Thus the sight of a profligate in the venereal disease, overrun with blotches and sores, puts both principles in motion: while his distress fixes my attention, sympathy prevails; but as soon as I think of his profligacy, hatred prevails, accompanied sometimes with a desire to punish. This, in general, is the case of distress occasioned by immoral actions that are not highly criminal: and if the distress and the immoral action make impressions equal or nearly so, sympathy and hatred, counterbalancing each other, will not suffer me either to afford relief, or to inflict punishment. What then will be the result? The principle of self-love solves the question: abhorring an object so loathsome, I naturally avert my eye, and walk off as fast as I can, in order to be relieved from the pain.

The present subject gives birth to several other observations, for which I could not find room above, without relaxing more from the strictness of order and connexion, than with safety could be indulged in discoursing upon an intricate subject. These observations I shall throw out loosely as they occur.

No action, right or wrong, is indifferent even to a mere spectator: if right, it inspires esteem; disgust, if wrong. But it is remarkable, that these emotions seldom are accompanied with desire: the abilities of man are limited, and he finds sufficient employment, in relieving the distressed, in requiting his benefactors, and in punishing those who



wrong him, without moving out of his sphere for the benefit or chastisement of those with whom he has no connexion.

If the good qualities of others raise my esteem, the same qualities in myself must produce a similar effect in a superior degree, upon account of the natural partiality every man hath for himself: and this increases self-love. If these qualities be of a high rank, they produce a conviction of superiority, which excites me to assume some sort of government over others. Mean qualities, on the other hand, produce in me a conviction of inferiority, which makes me submit to others. These convictions, distributed among individuals, by measure and proportion, may justly be esteemed the solid basis of government; because upon them depend the natural submission of the many to the few, without which even the mildest government would be in a violent state, and have a constant tendency to dissolution.

No other branch of the human constitution shows more visibly our destination for society; nor tends more to our improvement, than appetite for fame or esteem: for as the whole conveniences of life are derived from mutual aid and support in society, it ought to be a capital aim to secure these conveniences, by gaining the esteem and affection of others. Reason, indeed, dictates that lesson: but reason alone is not sufficient in a matter of such importance; and the appetite mentioned is a motive more powerful than reason, to be active in gaining esteem and affection. That appetite, at the same time, is finely adjusted to the moral branch of our constitution, by promoting all the moral virtues: for what means are there to attract love and esteem so effectual as a virtuous course of life? if a man be just and beneficent, if he be temperate,



modest, and prudent, he will infallibly gain the esteem and love of all who know him.

Communication of passion to related objects, is an illustrious instance of the care of Providence to extend social connexions as far as the limited nature of man can admit. That communication is so far hurtful, as to spread the malevolent passions beyond their natural bounds; but let it be remarked, that this unhappy effect regards savages only, who give way to malevolent passions; for under the discipline of society, these passions being subdued, are in a good measure eradicated; and in their place succeed the kindly affections, which, meeting with all encouragement, take possession of the mind, and govern all our actions. In that condition, the progress of passion along related objects, by spreading the kindly affections through a multitude of individuals, hath a glorious effect.

Nothing can be more entertaining to a rational mind, than the economy of the human passions, of which I have attempted to give some faint notion. It must, however, be acknowledged, that our passions when they happen to swell beyond proper limits, take on a less regular appearance: reason may proclaim our duty, but the will, influenced by passion, makes gratification always welcome. Hence the power of passion, which, when in excess, cannot be resisted but by the utmost fortitude of mind: it is bent upon gratification; and where proper objects are wanting, it clings to any object at hand without distinction. Thus joy inspired by a fortunate event, is diffused upon every person around by acts of benevolence; and resentment for an atrocious injury done by one out of reach, seizes the first object that occurs to vent itself upon. Those who believe in prophecies, even wish the accomplishment; and a weak mind is disposed



voluntarily to fulfil a prophecy, in order to gratify its wish. Shakspeare, whom no particle of human nature hath escaped, however remote from common observation, describes that weakness :

*King Henry.* Doth any name particular belong  
Unto that lodging where I first did swoon?

*Warwick.* 'Tis call'd *Jerusalem*, my noble Lord.

*King Henry.* Laud be to God! e'ven there my life must end,  
It hath been prophesy'd to me many years,  
I should not die but in *Jerusalem*,  
Which vainly I suppos'd the Holy Land.  
But bear me to that chamber, there I'll lie :  
In that *Jerusalem* shall *Henry* die.

*Second part, Henry IV, Act IV. Sc. last.*

I could not deny myself the amusement of the foregoing observation, though it doth not properly come under my plan. The irregularities of passion proceeding from peculiar weaknesses and biasses, I do not undertake to justify ; and of these we have had many examples.\* It is sufficient that passions common to all, are made subservient to beneficent purposes. I shall only observe, that, in a polished society, instances of irregular passions are rare, and that their mischief doth not extend far.

\* Part V. of the present chapter.



## CHAPTER III.

*Beauty.*

HAVING discoursed in general of emotions and passions, I proceed to a more narrow inspection of such of them as serve to unfold the principles of the fine arts. It is the province of a writer upon ethics, to give a full enumeration of all the passions; and of each separately to assign the nature, the cause, the gratification, and the effects. But a treatise of ethics is not my province: I carry my view no farther than to the elements of criticism, in order to show, that the fine arts are a subject of reasoning as well as of taste. An extensive work would ill suit a design so limited: and to confine this work within moderate bounds, the following plan may contribute. The observation made above, that things are the causes of emotions, by means of their properties and attributes,\* furnisheth a hint for distribution. Instead of a painful and tedious examination of the several passions and emotions, I purpose to confine my inquiries to such attributes, relations, and circumstances, as in the fine arts are chiefly employed to raise agreeable emotions. Attributes of single objects, as the most simple, shall take the lead; to be followed with

\* Chapter II. part. i. sect. i. first note,



particulars, which, depending on relations, are not found in single objects. Despatching next some coincident matters, I proceed to my chief aim ; which is, to establish practical rules for the fine arts, derived from principles previously established. This is a general view of the intended method ; reserving, however, a privilege to vary it in particular instances, where a deviation may be more commodious. I begin with Beauty, the most noted of all the qualities that belong to single objects.

The term *beauty*, in its native signification, is appropriated to objects of sight : objects of the other senses may be agreeable, such as the sounds of musical instruments, the smoothness and softness of some surfaces ; but the agreeableness denominated *beauty* belongs to objects of sight.

Of all the objects of external sense, an object of sight is the most complex : in the very simplest, colour is perceived, figure and length, breadth, and thickness. A tree is composed of a trunk, branches, and leaves ; it has colour, figure, size, and sometimes motion : by means of each of these particulars, separately considered, it appears beautiful ; how much more so, when they are all united together ? The beauty of the human figure is extraordinary, being a composition of numberless beauties arising from the parts and qualities of the object, various colours, various motions, figures, size, &c. all united in one complex object, and striking the eye with combined force. Hence it is, that beauty, a quality so remarkable in visible objects, lends its name to express every thing that is eminently agreeable : thus, by a figure of speech, we say a beautiful sound, a beautiful thought or expression, a beautiful theorem, a beautiful event, a beautiful discovery in art or science. But, as



figurative expression is the subject of a following chapter, this chapter is confined to beauty in its proper signification.

It is natural to suppose, that a perception so various as that of beauty, comprehending sometimes many particulars, sometimes few, should occasion emotions equally various; and yet all the various emotions of beauty maintain one common character, that of sweetness and gaiety.

Considering, attentively, the beauty of visible objects, we discover two kinds. The first may be termed *intrinsic* beauty, because it is discovered in a single object viewed apart without relation to any other: the examples above given are of that kind. The other may be termed *relative* beauty, being founded on the relation of objects. The purposed distribution would lead me to handle these beauties separately: but they are frequently so intimately connected, that, for the sake of connexion, I am forced, in this instance, to vary from the plan, and to bring them both into the same chapter. Intrinsic beauty is an object of sense merely: to perceive the beauty of a spreading oak, or of a flowing river, no more is required but singly an act of vision. The perception of relative beauty is accompanied with an act of understanding and reflection; for of a fine instrument or engine, we perceive not the relative beauty, until we be made acquainted with its use and destination. In a word, intrinsic beauty is ultimate: relative beauty is that of means relating to some good end or purpose. These different beauties agree in one capital circumstance, that both are equally perceived as belonging to the object. This is evident with respect to intrinsic beauty; but will not be so readily admitted with respect to the other: the utility of the plough for example, may make it an object of



admiration or of desire: but why should utility make it appear beautiful? A natural propensity mentioned above\* will explain that doubt: the beauty of the effect, by an easy transition of ideas, is transferred to the cause; and is perceived as one of the qualities of the cause. Thus a subject void of intrinsic beauty appears beautiful from its utility; an old Gothic tower, that has no beauty in itself, appears beautiful, considered as proper to defend against an enemy; a dwelling-house void of all regularity, is however beautiful in the view of convenience; and the want of form or symmetry in a tree, will not prevent its appearing beautiful, if it be known to produce good fruit.

When these two beauties coincide in any object, it appears delightful: every member of the human body possesses both in a high degree: the fine proportions and slender make of a horse destined for running, please every eye; partly from symmetry, and partly from utility.

The beauty of utility, being proportioned accurately to the degree of utility, requires no illustration; but intrinsic beauty, so complex as I have said, cannot be handled distinctly without being analysed into its constituent parts. If a tree be beautiful by means of its colour, its figure, its size, its motion, it is in reality possessed of so many different beauties, which ought to be examined separately, in order to have a clear notion of them when combined. The beauty of colour is too familiar to need explanation. Do not the bright and cheerful colours of gold and silver contribute to preserve these metals in high estimation? The beauty of figure, arising from various circumstances and different views, is more complex: for example,

\* Chapter II. part i. sect. 5.



viewing any body as a whole, the beauty of its figure arises from regularity and simplicity; viewing the parts with relation to each other, uniformity, proportion, and order, contribute to its beauty. The beauty of motion deserves a chapter by itself; and another chapter is destined for grandeur, being distinguishable from beauty in its proper sense. For a description of regularity, uniformity, proportion, and order, if thought necessary, I refer my reader to the Appendix at the end of the book. Upon simplicity I must make a few cursory observations such as may be of use in examining the beauty of single objects.

A multitude of objects crowding into the mind at once, disturb the attention, and pass without making any impression, or any distinct impression; in a group, no single object makes the figure it would do apart, when it occupies the whole attention.\* For the same reason, the impression made by an object that divides the attention by the multiplicity of its parts, equals not that of a more simple object comprehended in a single view: parts extremely complex must be considered in portions successively; and a number of impressions in succession, which cannot unite because not simultaneous, never touch the mind like one entire impression made as it were at one stroke. This justifies simplicity in works of art, as opposed to complicated circumstances and crowded ornaments. There is an additional reason for simplicity, in works of dignity or elevation; which is, that the mind attached to beauties of a high rank, cannot descend to inferior beauties. The best artists accordingly have in all ages been governed by a

\* See the Appendix, containing definitions, and explanation of terms, sect. 33.



taste for simplicity. How comes it then that we find profuse decoration prevailing in works of art? The reason plainly is, that authors and architects, who cannot reach the higher beauties, endeavour to supply want of genius by multiplying those that are inferior.

These things premised, I proceed to examine the beauty of figure as arising from the above mentioned particulars, namely, regularity, uniformity, proportion, order, and simplicity. To exhaust this subject would require a volume; and I have not even a whole chapter to spare. To inquire why an object, by means of the particulars mentioned, appears beautiful, would, I am afraid, be a vain attempt: it seems the most probable opinion, that the nature of man was originally framed with a relish for them, in order to answer wise and good purposes. To explain these purposes or final causes, though a subject of great importance, has scarce been attempted by any writer. One thing is evident, that our relish for the particulars mentioned, adds much beauty to the objects that surround us; which of course tends to our happiness: and the Author of our nature has given many signal proofs that this final cause is not below his care. We may be confirmed in this thought upon reflecting, that our taste for these particulars is not accidental, but uniform and universal, making a branch of our nature. At the same time, it ought not to be overlooked, that regularity, uniformity, order, and simplicity, contribute each of them to readiness of apprehension; enabling us to form more distinct images of objects, than can be done with the utmost attention where these particulars are not found. With respect to proportion, it is in some instances connected with a useful end, as in animals, where the best proportioned are the strongest



and most active ; but instances are still more numerous, where the proportions we relish have no connexion with utility. Writers on architecture insist much on the proportions of a column, and assign different proportions to the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian : but no architect will maintain, that the most accurate proportions contribute more to use, than several that are less accurate and less agreeable ; neither will it be maintained, that the length, breadth, and height of rooms, assigned as the most beautiful proportions, tend also to make them the more commodious. With respect then to the final cause of proportion, I see not more to be made of it but to rest upon the final cause first mentioned, namely, its contributing to our happiness, by increasing the beauty of visible objects.

And now with respect to the beauty of figure, as far as it depends on the other circumstances mentioned ; as to which, having room only for a slight specimen, I confine myself to the simplest figures. A circle and a square are each of them perfectly regular, being equally confined to a precise form, which admits not the slightest variation : a square, however, is less beautiful than a circle. And the reason seems to be, that the attention is divided among the sides and angles of a square, whereas the circumference of a circle ; being a single object, makes one entire impression. And this simplicity contributes to beauty : which may be illustrated by another example : a square, though not more regular than a hexagon or octagon, is more beautiful than either : for what other reason, but that a square is more simple, and the attention less divided ? This reasoning will appear still more conclusive, when we consider any regular polygon of very many sides ; for of this figure the mind can never have any distinct perception.



A square is more regular than a parallelogram, and its parts more uniform; and for these reasons it is more beautiful. But that holds with respect to intrinsic beauty only; for in many instances utility turns the scale on the side of the parallelogram: this figure, for the doors and windows of a dwelling-house, is preferred, because of utility; and here we find the beauty of utility prevailing over that of regularity and uniformity.

A parallelogram again depends, for its beauty, on the proportion of its sides: a great inequality of sides annihilates its beauty: approximation towards equality hath the same effect; for proportion there degenerates into imperfect uniformity, and the figure appears an unsuccessful attempt towards a square. And thus proportion contributes to beauty.

An equilateral triangle yields not to a square in regularity, nor in uniformity of parts, and it is more simple. But an equilateral triangle is less beautiful than a square; which must be owing to inferiority of order in the position of its parts: the sides of an equilateral triangle incline to each other in the same angle, being the most perfect order they are susceptible of: but this order is obscure, and far from being so perfect as the parallelism of the sides of a square. Thus order contributes to the beauty of visible objects, no less than simplicity, regularity, or proportion.

A parallelogram exceeds an equilateral triangle in the orderly disposition of its parts: but being inferior in uniformity and simplicity, it is less beautiful.

Uniformity is singular in one capital circumstance, that it is apt to disgust by excess: a number of things destined for the same use, such as windows, chairs, spoons, buttons, cannot be too uniform; for supposing their figure to be good,



utility requires uniformity: but a scrupulous uniformity of parts in a large garden or field, is far from being agreeable. Uniformity among connected objects belongs not to the present subject: it is handled in the chapter of uniformity and variety.

In all the works of nature, simplicity makes an illustrious figure. It also makes a figure in works of art: profuse ornament in painting, gardening, or architecture, as well as in dress or in language, shows a mean or corrupted taste:

Poets, like painters, thus unskill'd to trace  
The naked nature and the living grace,  
With gold and jewels cover every part,  
And hide with ornaments their want of art.

*Pope's Essay on Criticism.*

No single property recommends a machine more than its simplicity; not solely for better answering its purpose, but by appearing in itself more beautiful. Simplicity in behaviour and manners has an enchanting effect, and never fails to gain our affection: very different are the artificial manners of modern times. General theorems, abstracting from their importance, are delightful by their simplicity, and by the easiness of their application to variety of cases. We take equal delight in the laws of motion, which, with the greatest simplicity, are boundless in their operations.

A gradual progress from simplicity to complex forms and profuse ornament, seems to be the fate of all the fine arts: in that progress these arts resemble behaviour, which, from original candour and simplicity, has degenerated into artificial refinements. At present, literary productions are crowded with words, epithets, figures: in music, sentiment is neglected for the luxury of harmony, and for difficult movement: in taste, properly so



called, poignant sauces, with complicated mixtures of different savours, prevail among people of condition: the French, accustomed to artificial red on a female cheek, think the modest colouring of nature altogether insipid.

The same tendency is discovered in the progress of the fine arts among the ancients. Some vestiges of the old Grecian buildings prove them to be of the Doric order: the Ionic succeeded, and seems to have been the favourite order, while architecture was in the height of glory: the Corinthian came next in vogue; and in Greece the buildings of that order appear mostly to have been erected after the Romans got footing there. At last came the Composite, with all its extravagances, where simplicity is sacrificed to finery and crowded ornament.

But what taste is to prevail next? for fashion is a continual flux, and taste must vary with it. After rich and profuse ornaments become familiar, simplicity appears lifeless and insipid; which would be an insurmountable obstruction, should any person of genius and taste endeavour to restore ancient simplicity.\*

The distinction between primary and secondary qualities in matter, seems now fully established. Heat and cold, smell and taste, though seeming to exist in bodies, are discovered to be effects caused by these bodies in a sensitive being: colour, which appears to the eye as spread upon a substance, has no existence but in the mind of the spectator. Qualities of that kind, which owe their existence to the percipient as much as to the object, are termed *secondary qualities*, and are distinguished from figure,

\* A sprightly writer observes, "that the noble simplicity of the Augustan age was driven out by false taste; that the gigantic, the puerile, the quaint, and at last the barbarous and the monkish, had each their successive admirers: that music has become a science of tricks and slight of hand." &c.



extension, solidity, which, in contradistinction to the former, are termed *primary* qualities, because they inhere in subjects whether perceived or not. This distinction suggests a curious inquiry, whether beauty be a primary or only a secondary quality of objects? The question is easily determined with respect to the beauty of colour; for, if colour be a secondary quality, existing no where but in the mind of the spectator, its beauty must exist there also. This conclusion equally holds with respect to the beauty of utility, which is plainly a conception of the mind, arising not from sight, but from reflecting that the thing is fitted for some good end or purpose. The question is more intricate with respect to the beauty of regularity: for, if regularity be a primary quality, why not also its beauty? That this is not a good inference, will appear from considering, that beauty, in its very conception, refers to a percipient; for an object is said to be beautiful, for no other reason but that it appears so to a spectator: the same piece of matter that to a man appears beautiful, may possibly appear ugly to a being of a different species. Beauty, therefore, which for its existence depends on the percipient as much as on the object perceived, cannot be an inherent property in either. And hence it is wittily observed by the poet, that beauty is not in the person beloved, but in the lover's eye. This reasoning is solid; and the only cause of doubt or hesitation is, that we are taught a different lesson by sense: a singular determination of nature makes us perceive both beauty and colour as belonging to the object, and, like figure or extension, as inherent properties. This mechanism is uncommon; and, when nature, to fulfil her intention, prefers any singular method of operation, we may be certain of some final cause that cannot be reached by



ordinary means. For the beauty of some objects we are indebted entirely to nature ; but, with respect to the endless variety of objects that owe their beauty to art and culture, the perception of beauty greatly promotes industry ; being to us a strong additional incitement to enrich our fields, and improve our manufactures. These however are but slight effects, compared with the connexions that are formed among individuals in society by means of this singular mechanism : the qualifications of the head and heart form undoubtedly the most solid and most permanent connexions ; but external beauty, which lies more in view, has a more extensive influence in forming these connexions : at any rate, it concurs in an eminent degree with mental qualifications to produce social intercourse, mutual goodwill, and consequently mutual aid and support, which are the life of society.

It must not, however, be overlooked, that the perception of beauty doth not, when immoderate, tend to advance the interests of society. Love, in particular, arising from a perception of beauty, loses, when excessive, its sociable character : the appetite for gratification prevailing over affection for the beloved object, is ungovernable ; and tends violently to its end, regardless of the misery that must follow. Love, in that state, is no longer a sweet agreeable passion : it becomes painful, like hunger or thirst ; and produceth no happiness but in the instant of fruition. This discovery suggests a most important lesson, that moderation in our desires and appetites, which fits us for doing our duty, contributes at the same time the most to happiness : even social passions, when moderate, are more pleasant than when they swell beyond proper bounds.



## CHAPTER IV.

*Grandeur and Sublimity.*

NATURE hath not more remarkably distinguished us from other animals by an erect posture, than by a capacious and aspiring mind, attaching us to things great and elevated. The ocean, the sky, seize the attention, and make a deep impression :\* robes of state are made large and full, to draw respect : we admire an elephant for its magnitude, notwithstanding its unwieldiness.

The elevation of an object affects us no less than its magnitude : a high place is chosen for the statue of a deity or hero : a tree growing on the brink of a precipice looks charming when viewed from the plain below : a throne is erected for the chief magistrate ; and a chair with a high seat for the president of a court. Among all nations, heaven is placed far above us, hell far below us.

In some objects, greatness and elevation concur to make a complicated impression : the Alps and the Peake of Teneriffe are proper examples ; with the following difference, that in the former greatness seems to prevail, elevation in the latter.

The emotions raised by great and by elevated objects, are clearly distinguishable, not only in in-

\* Longinus observes, that nature inclines us to admire, not a small rivulet, however clear and transparent, but the Nile, the Ister, the Rhine, or still more the ocean. The sight of a small fire produceth no emotion ; but we are struck with the boiling furnaces of *Ætna*, pouring out whole rivers of liquid flame. *Treatise of the Sublime, chap. xxix.*



ternal feeling, but even in their external expressions. A great object makes the spectator endeavour to enlarge his bulk ; which is remarkable in plain people who give way to nature without reserve ; in describing a great object, they naturally expand themselves by drawing in air with all their force. An elevated object produces a different expression : it makes the spectator stretch upward, and stand a-tiptoe.

Great and elevated objects considered with relation to the emotions produced by them, are termed *grand* and *sublime*. *Grandeur* and *sublimity* have a double signification : they commonly signify the quality or circumstance in objects by which the emotions of grandeur and sublimity are produced ; sometimes the emotions themselves.

In handling the present subject, it is necessary that the impression made on the mind by the magnitude of an object, abstracting from its other qualities, should be ascertained. And because abstraction is a mental operation of some difficulty, the safest method for judging is, to choose a plain object that is neither beautiful nor deformed, if such a one can be found. The plainest that occurs, is a huge mass of rubbish, the ruins, perhaps, of some extensive building, or a large heap of stones, such as are collected together for keeping in memory a battle, or other remarkable event. Such an object, which in miniature would be perfectly indifferent, makes an impression by its magnitude, and appears agreeable. And supposing it so large, as to fill the eye, and to prevent the attention from wandering upon other objects, the impression it makes will be so much the deeper.\*

But, though a plain object of that kind be agree-

\* See Appendix, terms defined, sect. 33.



able, it is not termed *grand* : it is not entitled to that character, unless, together with its size, it be possessed of other qualities that contribute to beauty, such as regularity, proportion, order, or colour : and according to the number of such qualities combined with magnitude, it is more or less grand. Thus, St. Peter's church at Rome, the great Pyramid of Egypt, the Alps towering above the clouds, a great arm of the sea, and, above all, a clear and serene sky, are grand, because, beside their size, they are beautiful in an eminent degree. On the other hand, an overgrown whale, having a disagreeable appearance, is not grand. A large building, agreeable by its regularity and proportions, is grand, and yet a much larger building destitute of regularity, has not the least tincture of grandeur. A single regiment in battle-array, makes a grand appearance ; which the surrounding crowd does not, though perhaps ten for one in number. And a regiment where the men are all in one livery, and the horses of one colour, makes a grander appearance, and consequently strikes more terror, than where there is confusion of colours and of dress. Thus greatness or magnitude is the circumstance that distinguishes grandeur from beauty : agreeableness is the genus, of which beauty and grandeur are species.

The emotion of grandeur, duly examined, will be found an additional proof of the foregoing doctrine. That this emotion is pleasant in a high degree, requires no other evidence but once to have seen a grand object ; and if an emotion of grandeur be pleasant, its cause or object, as observed above, must infallibly be agreeable in proportion.

The qualities of grandeur and beauty are not more distinct, than the emotions are, which these qualities produce in a spectator. It is observed in



the chapter immediately foregoing, that all the various emotions of beauty have one common character, that of sweetness and gaiety. The emotion of grandeur has a different character: a large object that is agreeable, occupies the whole attention, and swells the heart into a vivid emotion, which though extremely pleasant, is rather serious than gay. And this affords a good reason for distinguishing in language these different emotions. The emotions raised by colour, by regularity, by proportion, and by order, have such a resemblance to each other, as readily to come under one general term, *viz. the emotion of beauty*; but the emotion of grandeur is so different from these mentioned, as to merit a peculiar name.

Though regularity, proportion, order, and colour, contribute to grandeur as well as to beauty, yet these qualities are not by far so essential to the former as to the latter. To make out that proposition, some preliminaries are requisite. In the first place, the mind, not being totally occupied with a small object, can give its attention at the same time to every minute part; but in a great or extensive object, the mind being totally occupied with the capital and striking parts, has no attention left for those that are little or indifferent. In the next place, two similar objects appear not similar when viewed at different distances; the similar parts of a very large object cannot be seen but at different distances; and for that reason, its regularity, and the proportion of its parts, are in some measure lost to the eye; neither are the irregularities of a very large object so conspicuous as of one that is small. Hence it is, that a large object is not so agreeable by its regularity, as a small object, nor so disagreeable by its irregularities.

These considerations make it evident, that grandeur is satisfied with a less degree of regularity and



of the other qualities mentioned, than is requisite for beauty ; which may be illustrated by the following experiment. Approaching to a small conical hill, we take an accurate survey of every part, and are sensible of the slightest deviation from regularity and proportion. Supposing the hill to be considerably enlarged, so as to make us less sensible of its regularity, it will upon that account, appear less beautiful. It will not, however, appear less agreeable, because some slight emotion of grandeur comes in place of what is lost in beauty. And at last, when the hill is enlarged to a great mountain, the small degree of beauty that is left, is sunk in its grandeur. Hence it is, that a towering hill is delightful, if it have but the slightest resemblance of a cone ; and a chain of mountains no less so, though deficient in the accuracy of order and proportion. We require a small surface to be smooth ; but in an extensive plain, considerable inequalities are overlooked. In a word, regularity, proportion, order, and colour, contribute to grandeur as well as to beauty ; but with a remarkable difference, that, in passing from small to great, they are not required in the same degree of perfection. This remark serves to explain the extreme delight we have in viewing the face of nature, when sufficiently enriched and diversified with objects. The bulk of the objects in a natural landscape are beautiful, and some of them grand : a flowing river, a spreading oak, a round hill, an extended plain, are delightful ; and even a rugged rock or barren heath, though in themselves disagreeable, contribute by contrast to the beauty of the whole : joining to these, the verdure of the fields, the mixture of light and shade, and the sublime canopy spread over all ; it will not appear wonderful, that so extensive a group of splendid objects should swell the



heart to its utmost bounds, and raise the strongest emotion of grandeur. The spectator is conscious of an enthusiasm, which cannot bear confinement, nor the strictness of regularity and order: he loves to range at large; and is so enchanted with magnificent objects, as to overlook slight beauties or deformities.

The same observation is applicable in some measure to works of art: in a small building, the slightest irregularity is disagreeable; but, in a magnificent palace, or a large Gothic church, irregularities are less regarded; in an epic poem we pardon many negligences that would not be permitted in a sonnet or epigram. Notwithstanding such exceptions, it may be justly laid down for a rule, That in works of art, order and regularity ought to be governing principles: and hence the observation of Longinus,\* "In works of art we have regard to exact proportion; in those of nature, to grandeur and magnificence."

The same reflections are in a good measure applicable to sublimity; particularly, that, like grandeur, it is a species of agreeableness; that a beautiful object placed high, appearing more agreeable than formerly, produces in the spectator a new emotion, termed *the emotion of sublimity*; and that the perfection of order, regularity, and proportion, is less required in objects placed high, or at a distance, than at hand.

The pleasant emotion raised by large objects, has not escaped the poets:

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He doth bestride the narrow world  
Like a Colossus; and we petty men  
Walk under his huge legs.

*Julius Cæsar, Act I. Sc. 3.*



*Cleopatra.* I dreamt there was an Emp'rōr Antony ;  
 Oh such another sleep, that I might see  
 But, such another man !  
 His face was as the heavens and therein stuck  
 A sun and moon, which kept their course, and lighted  
 The little O o' the earth.  
 His legs bestrid the ocean, his rear'd arm  
 Crested the world.

*Antony and Cleopatra, Act V. Sc. 3.*

~~Majesty~~  
 Dies not alone, but, like a gulf, doth draw  
 What's near it with it. It's a massy wheel  
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount ;  
 To whose huge spokes, ten thousand lesser things  
 Are mortis'd and adjoin'd ; which when it falls,  
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
 Attends the boist'rous ruin.

*Hamlet, Act III. Sc. 8.*

The poets have also made good use of the emotion produced by the elevated situation of an object :

Quod si me lyricis vatibus inseres,  
 Sublimi feriam sidera vertice.

*Horat. Carm. l. I. ode 1.*

Oh thou ! the earthly author of my blood,  
 Whose youthful spirit, in me regenerate,  
 Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up,  
 To reach at victory above my head.

*Richard II. Act I. Sc. 4.*

Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal  
 The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne.

*Richard II. Act V. Sc. 2.*

*Antony.* Why was I raised the meteor of the world,  
 Hung in the skies, and blazing as I travell'd,  
 Till all my fires were spent ; and then cast downward ;  
 To be trod out by Cæsar ?

*Dryden, All for Love, Act I.*



The description of Paradise in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*, is a fine illustration of the impression made by elevated objects:

So on he fares, and to the border comes  
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,  
As with a rural mound, the champain head  
Of a steep wilderness; whose hairy sides  
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,  
Access deny'd; and overhead up grew  
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,  
Cedar and pine, and fir, and branching palm,  
A sylvan scene; and as the ranks ascend,  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops  
The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung;  
Which to our general sire gave prospect large  
Into his nether empire neigh'ring round.  
And higher than that wall a circling row  
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,  
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,  
Appear'd with gay enamell'd colours mix'd.

B. iv. l. 131.

Though a grand object is agreeable, we must not infer that a little object is disagreeable; which would be unhappy for man, considering that he is surrounded with so many objects of that kind. The same holds with respect to place: a body placed high is agreeable; but the same body placed low, is not by that circumstance rendered disagreeable. Littleness and lowness of place are precisely similar in the following particular, that they neither give pleasure nor pain. And in this may visibly be discovered peculiar attention in fitting the internal constitution of man to his external circumstances: were littleness and lowness of place agreeable, greatness and elevation could not be so: were littleness and lowness of place disagreeable, they would occasion perpetual uneasiness.



The difference between great and little with respect to agreeableness, is remarkably felt in a series, when we pass gradually from the one extreme to the other. A mental progress from the capital to the kingdom, from that to Europe—to the whole earth—to the planetary system—to the universe, is extremely pleasant : the heart swells and the mind is dilated, at every step. The returning in an opposite direction is not positively painful, though our pleasure lessens at every step, till it vanish into indifference : such a progress may sometimes produce pleasure of a different sort, which arises from taking a narrower and narrower inspection. The same observation holds in a progress upward and downward. Ascent is pleasant because it elevates us : but descent is never painful ; it is for the most part pleasant from a different cause, that it is according to the order of nature. The fall of a stone from any height is extremely agreeable by its accelerated motion. I feel it pleasant to descend from a mountain, because the descent is natural and easy. Neither is looking downward painful ; on the contrary, to look down upon objects makes part of the pleasure of elevation : looking down becomes then only painful when the object is so far below as to create dizziness ; and even when that is the case, we feel a sort of pleasure mixed with the pain, witness Shakspeare's description of Dover cliffs :

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—How fearful

And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low !  
The crows and choughs, that wing the midway-air,  
Shew scarce so gross as beetles. Half-way down  
Hangs one that gathers samphire ; dreadful trade !  
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.  
The fishermen that walk upon the beach,  
Appear like mice ; and yon tall anchoring bark  
Diminished to her cock ; her cock, a buoy  
Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge,



That on th' unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,  
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,  
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight  
Topple down headlong.

*King Lear, Act IV. Sc. 6.*

A remark is made above, that the emotions of grandeur and sublimity are nearly allied. And hence it is, that the one term is frequently put for the other: an increasing series of numbers, for example, producing an emotion similar to that of mounting upward, is commonly termed an *ascending series*: a series of numbers gradually decreasing, producing an emotion similar to that of going downward, is commonly termed a *descending series*: we talk familiarly of going *up* to the capital, and of going *down* to the country: from a lesser kingdom we talk of going *up* to a greater; whence the *anabasis* in the Greek language, when one travels from Greece to Persia. We discover the same way of speaking in the language even of Japan;\* and its universality proves it the offspring of a natural feeling.

The foregoing observation leads us to consider grandeur and sublimity in a figurative sense, and as applicable to the fine arts. Hitherto these terms have been taken in their proper sense, as applicable to objects of sight only: and it was of importance to bestow some pains upon that article; because, generally speaking, the figurative sense of a word is derived from its proper sense, which holds remarkably at present. Beauty in its original signification is confined to objects of sight; but, as many other objects, intellectual as well as moral, raise emotions resembling that of beauty, the resemblance of the effects prompts us to extend the

\*Kempfer's History of Japan, b. v. chap. 2.



term *beauty* to these objects. This equally accounts for the terms *grandeur* and *sublimity* taken in a figurative sense. Every motion, from whatever cause proceeding, that resembles an emotion of grandeur or elevation, is called by the same name: thus generosity is said to be an *elevated* emotion, as well as great courage; and that firmness of soul which is superior to misfortunes, obtains the peculiar name of *magnanimity*. On the other hand, every emotion that contracts the mind, and fixeth it upon things trivial or of no importance, is termed *low*, by its resemblance to an emotion produced by a little or low object of sight: thus an appetite for trifling amusements is called a *low taste*. The same terms are applied to characters and actions: we talk familiarly of an *elevated* genius, of a *great* man, and equally so of *littleness* of mind: some actions are *great* and *elevated*, and others are *little* and *grovelling*. Sentiments, and even expressions, are characterised in the same manner: an expression or sentiment that raises the mind is denominated *great* or *elevated*; and hence the *SUBLIME*\* in poetry. In such figurative terms, we lose the distinction between *great* and *elevated* in their proper sense; for the resemblance is not so entire as to preserve these terms distinct in their figurative application. We carry this figure still farther,

\* Longinus gives a description of the Sublime that is not amiss, though far from being just in every circumstance, "That the mind is elevated by it, and so sensibly affected, as to swell in transport and inward pride, as if what is only heard or read, were its own invention." But he adheres not to this description; in his 6th chapter, he justly observes, that many passions have nothing of the grand, such as grief, fear, and pity, which depress the mind instead of raising it; and yet in chap. 8 he mentions Sapho's ode upon love as sublime: beautiful it is undoubtedly, but it cannot be sublime, because it really depresses the mind instead of raising it. His translator Boileaux is not more successful in his instances: in his 10th reflection, he cites a passage from Demosthenes and another from Herodotus as sublime, which have not the least tincture of that quality.



Elevation in its proper sense, imports superiority of place; and lowness, inferiority of place: and hence a man of *superior* talents, of *superior* rank, of *inferior* parts, of *inferior* taste, and such like. The veneration we have for our ancestors, and for the ancients in general, being similar to the emotion produced by an elevated object of sight, justifies the figurative expression, of the ancients being *raised* above us, or possessing a *superior* place. And we may remark in passing, that as words are intimately connected with ideas, many, by this form of expression, are led to conceive their ancestors as really above them in place, and their posterity below them:

A grandam's name is little less in love,  
Than is the doting title of a mother:  
They are as children but one step below.

*Richard III. Act IV. Sc. 5*

The notes of the gamut, proceeding regularly from the blunter or grosser sounds to the more acute and piercing, produce in the hearer a feeling somewhat similar to what is produced by mounting upward; and this gives occasion to the figurative expressions, *a high note*, *a low note*.

Such is the resemblance in feeling between real and figurative grandeur, that among the nations on the east coast of Africa, who are directed purely by nature, the officers of state are, with respect to rank, distinguished by the length of the baton each carries in his hand; and in Japan, princes and great lords shew their rank by the length and size of their sedan-poles.\* Again, it is a rule in painting, that figures of a small size are proper for a grotesque pieces; but that an historical subject, grand and

\* *Kempfer's History of Japan.*



portant, requires figures as great as the life. The resemblance of these feelings is in reality so strong, that elevation, in a figurative sense, is observed to have the same effect, even externally, with real elevation.

*K. Henry.* This day is call'd the feast of Crispian.  
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,  
Will stand a-tiptoe when this day is nam'd,  
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.

*Henry V. Act IV. Sc. 8.*

The resemblance in feeling between real and figurative grandeur, is humorously illustrated by Addison in criticising upon English tragedy: "The ordinary method of making an hero, is to clap a huge plume of feathers upon his head, which rises so high, that there is often a greater length from his chin to the top of his head, than to the sole of his foot. One would believe, that we thought a great man and a tall man the same thing. As these superfluous ornaments upon the head make a great man, a princess generally receives her grandeur from those additional incumbrances that fall into her tail: I mean the broad sweeping train, that follows her in all her motions; and finds constant employment for a boy, who stands behind her to open and spread it to advantage."\* The Scythians, impressed with the fame of Alexander, were astonished when they found him a little man.

A gradual progress from small to great is no less remarkable in figurative, than in real grandeur or elevation. Every one must have observed the delightful effect of a number of thoughts or senti-

\* Spectator, No. 42.



ments, artfully disposed like an ascending series, and making impressions deeper and deeper: such disposition of members in a period is termed a *climax*.

Within certain limits, grandeur and sublimity produce their strongest effects, which lessen by excess as well as by defect. This is remarkable in grandeur and sublimity taken in their proper sense: the grandest emotion that can be raised by a visible object, is where the object can be taken in at one view; if so immense as not to be comprehended but in parts, it tends rather to distract than satisfy the mind:\* in like manner, the strongest emotion produced by elevation, is where the object is seen distinctly; a greater elevation lessens in appearance the object, till it vanishes out of sight with its pleasant emotion. The same is equally remarkable in figurative grandeur and elevation, which shall be handled together, because, as observed above, they are scarce distinguishable. Sentiments may be so strained as to become obscure, or to exceed the capacity of the human mind: against such license of imagination, every good writer will be upon his guard. And therefore it is of greater importance to observe, that even the true sublime may be carried beyond that pitch which produces the highest entertainment: we are undoubtedly susceptible of a greater elevation than can be inspired by human actions, the most heroic and magnanimous; witness what we feel from Milton's description of superior beings: yet every man must be sensible of a more constant and sweet elevation,

\* It is justly observed by Addison, that perhaps a man would have been more astonished with the majestic air that appeared in one of Lysippus's statues of Alexander, though no bigger than the life, than he might have been with Mount Athos, had it been cut into the figure of the hero, according to the proposal of Phidias, with a river in one hand, and a city in the other. *Spectator*, No. 415.



when the history of his own species is the subject; he enjoys an elevation equal to that of the greatest hero, of an Alexander or a Cæsar, of a Brutus or an Epaminondas; he accompanies these heroes in their sublimest sentiments and most hazardous exploits, with a magnanimity equal to theirs; and finds it no stretch, to preserve the same tone of mind, for hours together, without sinking. The case is not the same in describing the actions or qualities of superior beings: the reader's imagination cannot keep pace with that of the poet; the mind, unable to support itself in a strained elevation, falls as if from a height; and the fall is immoderate, like the elevation: where that effect is not felt, it must be prevented by some obscurity in the conception, which frequently attends the description of unknown objects. Hence the St. Francis, St. Dominics, and other tutelary saints, among the Roman Catholics. A mind unable to raise itself to the Supreme being, self-existent and eternal, or to support itself in a strained elevation, finds itself more at ease in using the intercession of some saint whose piety and penances while on earth are supposed to have made him a favourite in heaven.

A strained elevation is attended with another inconvenience, that the author is apt to fall suddenly as well as the reader; because it is not a little difficult, to descend sweetly and easily from such elevation, to the ordinary tone of the subject. The following passage is a good illustration of that observation:

Sæpe etiam immensum cœlo venit agmen aquarum,  
Et sædam glomerant tempestatem imbribus atris  
Conlectæ ex alto nubes. Ruit arduus æther,  
Et pluvia ingenti sata læta boumque labores  
Diluit. Implentur fossæ, et cava flumina crescunt  
Cum sonitu, fervetque fretis spirantibus æquor.



Ipsæ Pater, media nimborum in nocte, coruscâ  
 Fulmina molitur dextra. Quo maxima motu  
 Terra tremît : fugere fera ! et mortalia corda  
 Per gentes humilis stravit pavor. Ille flagranti  
 Aut Atho, aut Rodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo  
 Dejicit : ingeminant austri, densissimus imber.

Virg. Georg. l. 1.

In the description of a storm, to figure Jupiter throwing down huge mountains with his thunderbolts, is hyperbolically sublime, if I may use the expression : the tone of mind produced by that image is so distant from the tone produced by a thick shower of rain, that the sudden transition must be unpleasant.

Objects of sight that are not remarkably great nor high, scarce raise any emotion of grandeur or of sublimity : and the same holds in other objects ; for we often find the mind roused and animated, without being carried to that height. This difference may be discerned in many sorts of music, as well as in some musical instruments : a kettle-drum rouses, and a hautboy is animating ; but neither of them inspires an emotion of sublimity : revenge animates the mind in a considerable degree ; but I think it never produceth an emotion that can be termed *grand* or *sublime* ; and I shall have occasion afterward to observe, that no disagreeable passion ever has that effect. I am willing to put this to the test, by placing before my reader a most spirited picture of revenge : it is a speech of Antony wailing over the body of Cæsar :

Wo to the hand that shed this costly blood !  
 Over thy wounds now do I prophecy,  
 (Which like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,  
 To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue,)  
 A curse shall light upon the kind of men ;  
 Domestic fury, and fierce civil strife,  
 Shall cumber all the parts of Italy ;



Blood and destruction shall be so in use,  
 And dreadful objects so familiar,  
 That mothers shall but smile, when they behold  
 Their infants quarter'd by the hands of war.  
 All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds,  
 And Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge,  
 With *Ate* by his side come hot from hell,  
 Shall in these confines, with a monarch's voice,  
 Cry, *Havock!* and let slip the dogs of war.

*Julius Cæsar, Act III. Sc. 4.*

No desire is more universal than to be exalted and honoured: and upon that account chiefly are we ambitious of power, riches, titles, fame, which would suddenly lose their relish, did they not raise us above others, and command submission and deference;\* and it may be thought that our attachment to things grand and lofty proceeds from their connexion with our favourite passion. This connexion has undoubtedly an effect: but that the preference given to things grand and lofty must have a deeper root in human nature, will appear from considering, that many bestow their time upon low and trifling amusements, without having the least tincture of this favourite passion: yet these very persons talk the same language with the rest of mankind, and prefer the more elevated pleasures: they acknowledge a more refined taste; and are ashamed of their own as low and groveling. This sentiment, constant and universal, must be the work of nature; and it plainly indicates an original attachment in human nature to every object that elevates the mind: some men may have a greater relish for an object not of the highest rank; but

\* *Honestum perse esse expetendum indicant pueri, in quibus, ut in speculis, natura cernitur. Quanta studia decertantium sunt! Quanta ipsa certamina! Ut illi efferuntur lætitia, cum vicerunt! Ut pudet victos! Ut se accusari nolunt! Ut capiunt laudari! Quos illi labores non perferunt, ut æquum principes sint!* *Cicero de finibus.*



they are conscious of the preference given by mankind in general to things grand and sublime; and they are sensible that their peculiar taste ought to yield to the general taste.

What is said above suggests a capital rule for reaching the sublime in such works of art as are susceptible of it: and that is, to present those parts or circumstances only which make the greatest figure, keeping out of view every thing low or trivial; for the mind, elevated by an important object, cannot, without reluctance, be forced down to bestow any share of its attention upon trifles. Such judicious selection of capital circumstances, is by an eminent critic styled *grandeur of manner*.\* In none of the fine arts is there so great scope for that rule as in poetry; which, by that means, enjoys a remarkable power of bestowing upon objects and events an air of grandeur: when we are spectators, every minute object presents itself in its order: but, in describing at second hand, these are laid aside, and the capital objects are brought close together. A judicious taste in thus selecting the most interesting incidents, to give them an united force, accounts for a fact that may appear surprising; which is, that we are more moved by a spirited narrative at second hand, than by being spectators of the event itself, in all its circumstances.

Longinus exemplifies the foregoing rule by a comparison of two passages.† The first, from Aristæus, is thus translated:

Ye pow'rs, what madness! how on ships so frail  
(Tremendous thought!) can thoughtless mortals sail?  
For stormy seas they quit the pleasing plain,  
Plant woods in waves, and dwell amidst the main.

\* Spectator, No. 415.

† Chapter VIII. of the Sublime.



Far o'er the deep (a trackless path) they go,  
And wander oceans in pursuit of woe.  
No ease their hearts, no rest their eyes can find,  
On heaven their looks, and on the waves their mind,  
Sunk are their spirits, while their arms they rear,  
And gods are wearied with their fruitless prayer.

The other, from Homer I shall give in Pope's translation :

Burst as a wave that from the cloud impends,  
And swell'd with tempests on the ship descends.  
White are the decks with foam ; the winds aloud  
Howl o'er the masts, and sing through every shroud.  
Pale, trembling, tir'd, the sailors freeze with fears,  
And instant death on every wave appears.

In the latter passage, the most striking circumstances are selected to fill the mind with terror and astonishment. The former is a collection of minute and low circumstances, which scatter the thought, and make no impression : it is at the same time full of verbal antitheses and low conceit, extremely improper in a scene of distress. But this last observation belongs to another head.

The following description of a battle is remarkably sublime, by collecting together, in the fewest words, those circumstances which make the greatest figure.

Like Autumn's dark storms pouring from two echoing hills,  
toward each other approached the heroes : as two dark streams  
from high rocks meet and roar on the plain, loud, rough and  
dark in battle, meet Lechlin and Inisfail. Chief mixes his  
strokes with chief, and man with man : steel sounds on steel,  
and helmets are cleft on high : blood bursts and smokes around ;  
strings murmur on the polish'd yew : darts rush along the sky :  
spears fall like sparks of flame that gild the stormy face of night.

As the noise of the troubled ocean when roll the waves on  
high, as the last peal of thundering heaven, such is the noise of



battle. Tho' Cormac's hundred bards were there, feeble were the voice of a hundred bards to send the deaths to future times; for many were the deaths of the heroes, and wide poured the blood of the valiant.

*Fingal.*

The following passage in the 4th book of the Iliad is a description of a battle, wonderfully ardent. "When now gathered on either side, the hosts plunged together in fight; shield is harshly laid to shield; spears crash on the brazen corslets; bossy buckler with buckler meets; loud tumult rages over all; groans are mixed with boasts of men: the slain and slayer join in noise; the earth is floating round with blood. As when two rushing streams from two mountains come roaring down, and throw together their rapid waters below, they roar along the gulphy vale: The startled shepherd hears the sound, as he stalks o'er the distant hills: So, as they mixed in fight, from both armies clamour with loud terror arose." But such general descriptions are not frequent in Homer. Even his single combats are rare. The fifth book is the longest account of a battle that is in the Iliad; and yet contains nothing but a long catalogue of chiefs killing chiefs, not in single combat neither, but at a distance, with an arrow or a javelin; and these chiefs named for the first time and the last. The same scene is continued through a great part of the sixth book. There is at the same time a minute description of every wound, which for accuracy may do honour to an anatomist, but in an epic poem is tiresome and fatiguing. There is no relief from horrid languor but the beautiful Greek language, and melody of Homer's versification.

In the twenty-first book of the Odyssey, there is a passage which deviates widely from the rule



above laid down: it concerns that part of the history of Penelope and her suitors, in which she is made to declare in favour of him who should prove the most dexterous in shooting with the bow of Ulysses:

Now gently winding up the fair ascent,  
By many an easy step, the matron went:  
Then o'er the pavement glides with grace divine,  
(With polish'd oak the level pavements shine;)  
The folding gates a dazzling light display'd,  
With pomp of various archittrave o'erlay'd.  
The bolt, obedient to the silken string,  
Forsakes the staple as she pulls the ring;  
The wards respondent to the key turn'd round;  
The bars fall back; the flying valves resound.  
Loud as a bull makes bill and valley ring;  
So roar'd the lock when it releas'd the spring.  
She moves majestic through the wealthy room,  
Where treasur'd garments cast a rich perfume;  
There from the column where aloft it hung,  
Reach'd, in its splendid case, the bow unstrung.

Virgil sometimes errs against this rule: in the following passages minute circumstances are brought into full view; and, what is still worse, they are described with all the pomp of poetical diction; *Æneid*, L. i. l. 214 to 219. L. vi. l. 176 to 182. L. vi. l. 212 to 231: and the last, which describes a funeral, is the less excusable, as the man whose funeral it is makes no figure in the poem.

The speech of Clytemnestra, descending from her chariot in the *Iphigenia* of Euripides,\* is stuffed with a number of common and trivial circumstances.

But of all writers, Lucan, as to this article, is the most injudicious: the sea-fight between the Ro-

\* Beginning of Act iii.



mans and Massilians,\* is described so much in detail, without exhibiting any grand or total view, that the reader is fatigued with endless circumstances, without ever feeling any degree of elevation; and yet there are some fine incidents, those for example of the two brothers, and of the old man and his son, which, taken separately, would affect us greatly. But Lucan, once engaged in a description, knows no end. See other passages of the same kind, *L. xxiv. l. 292 to 337. L. iv. l. 750 to 765.* The episode of the sorceress Erichtho, end of book vi. is intolerably minute and prolix.

To these I venture to oppose a passage from an old historical ballad:

Go, little page, tell Hardiknute,  
That lives on hill so high,†  
To draw his sword, the dread of faes,  
And haste to follow me.

The little page flew swift as dart  
Flung by his master's arm,  
"Come down, come down, Lord Hardiknute,  
"And rid your king from harm."

This rule is also applicable to other fine arts. In painting it is established, that the principal figure must be put in the strongest light; that the beauty of attitude consists in placing the nobler parts most in view, and in suppressing the smaller parts as much as possible; that the folds of the drapery must be few and large; that fore-shortenings are bad, because they make the parts appear little; and that the muscles ought to be kept as entire as possible, without being divided into small sections. Every one at present subscribes to that

\* Lib. iii. beginning at line 567.

† *Hill*, in the old Scotch language, is pronounced *hee*.



rule as applied to gardening, in opposition to parterres split into a thousand small parts in the stiffest regularity of figure. The most eminent architects have governed themselves by the same rule in all their works.

Another rule chiefly regards the sublime, though it is applicable to every sort of literary performance intended for amusement ; and that is to avoid as much as possible abstract and general terms. Such terms, similar to mathematical signs, are contrived to express our thoughts in a concise manner ; but images, which are the life of poetry, cannot be raised in any perfection but by introducing particular objects. General terms that comprehend a number of individuals, must be excepted from that rule : our kindred, our clan, our country, and words of the like import, though they scarce raise any image, have, however, a wonderful power over our passions : the greatness of the complex object overbalances the obscurity of the image.

Grandeur, being an extreme vivid emotion, is not readily produced in perfection but by reiterated impressions. The effect of a single impression can be but momentary ; and if one feel suddenly somewhat like a swelling or exaltation of mind, the emotion vanisheth as soon as felt. Single thoughts or sentiments, I know, are often cited as examples of the sublime ; but their effect is far inferior to that of a grand subject displayed in its capital parts. I shall give a few examples, that the reader may judge for himself. In the famous action of Thermopylæ, where Leonidas the Spartan king, with his chosen band, fighting for their country, were cut off to the last man, a saying is reported of Dieneces, one of the band, which, expressing cheerful and undisturbed bravery, is well entitled to the first place in examples of that kind. Respect-



ing the number of their enemies, it was observed, that the arrows shot by such a multitude would intercept the light of the sun. So much the better, says he, for we shall then fight in the shade.\*

*Somerset.* Ah! Warwick, Warwick, wert thou as we are,  
We might recover all our loss again  
The Queen from France hath brought a puissant power,  
E'en now we heard the news. Ah! couldst thou fly!

*Warwick.* Why, then I would not fly.

*Third Part, Henry VI. Act V. Sc. 3.*

Such a sentiment from a man expiring of his wounds, is truly heroic, and must elevate the mind to the greatest height that can be done by a single expression: it will not suffer in a comparison with the famous sentiment *Qu'il mourut* of Corneille: the latter is a sentiment of indignation merely, the former of firm and cheerful courage.

To cite in opposition many a sublime passage, enriched with the finest images, and dressed in the most nervous expressions, would scarce be fair: I shall produce but one instance, from Shakspeare, which sets a few objects before the eye, without much pomp of language: it operates its effect by representing these objects in a climax, raising the mind higher and higher till it feel the emotion of grandeur in perfection:

The cloud-capt tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve, &c.

*The cloud-capt tow'rs* produce an elevating emotion, heightened by the *gorgeous palaces*; and the mind is carried still higher and higher by the images that follow. Successive images making thus

\* Herodotus, Book vii.



deeper and deeper impressions, must elevate more than any single image can do.

As, on the one hand, no means directly applied have more influence to raise the mind than grandeur and sublimity ; so, on the other, no means indirectly applied have more influence to sink and depress it : for in a state of elevation, the artful introduction of an humbling object, makes the fall great in proportion to the elevation. Of this observation Shakspeare gives a beautiful example, in the passage last quoted :

The cloud-capt tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,  
Leave not a wreck behind. —

*Tempest, Act IV. Sc. 4.*

The elevation of the mind in the former part of this beautiful passage, makes the fall great in proportion, when the most humbling of all images is introduced, that of an utter dissolution of the earth and its inhabitants. The mind, when warmed, is more susceptible of impressions than in a cool state ; and a depressing or melancholy object listened to, makes the strongest impression when it reaches the mind in its highest state of elevation or cheerfulness.

But a humbling image is not always necessary to produce that effect : a remark is made above, that, in describing superior beings, the reader's imagination, unable to support itself in a strained elevation, falls often as from a height, and sinks even below its ordinary tone. The following instance comes luckily in view ; for a better cannot be given : " God said, Let there be light, and there was light." Longinus quotes this passage from  
VOL. I.



Moses as a shining example of the sublime ; and it is scarce possible, in fewer words, to convey so clear an image of the infinite power of the Deity : but then it belongs to the present subject to remark, that the emotion of sublimity raised by this image is but momentary ; and that the mind, unable to support itself in an elevation so much above nature, immediately sinks down into humility and veneration for a being so far exalted above grovelling mortals. Every one is acquainted with a dispute about that passage between two French critics,\* the one positively affirming it to be sublime, the other as positively denying. What I have remarked shows that both of them have reached the truth, but neither of them the whole truth : the primary effect of the passage is undoubtedly an emotion of grandeur ; which so far justifies Boileau : but then every one must be sensible, that the emotion is merely a flash which, vanishing instantaneously, gives way to humility and veneration. That indirect effect of sublimity justifies Huet, who, being a man of true piety, and probably not much carried by imagination, felt the humbling passion more sensibly than his antagonist did. And, laying aside difference of character, Huet's opinion may, I think, be defended as the more solid ; because in such images, the depressing emotions are the more sensibly felt, and have the longer endurance.

The straining an elevated subject beyond due bounds, is a vice not so frequent as to require the correction of criticism. But false sublime is a rock that writers of more fire than judgment commonly split on ; and, therefore, a collection of examples may be of use as a beacon to future adventurers. One species of false sublime, known by the name

\* Boileau and Huet.



of *bombast*, is common among writers of a mean genius: it is a serious endeavour, by strained description, to raise a low or familiar subject above its rank; which, instead of being sublime, becomes ridiculous. I am extremely sensible how prone the mind is, in some animating passions, to magnify its objects beyond natural bounds: but such hyperbolical description has its limits; and, when carried beyond the impulse of the propensity, it degenerates into burlesque. Take the following examples.

*Sejanus.* ——— Great and high  
The world knows only two, that's Róme and I.  
My roof receives me not; 'tis air I tread,  
And at each step I feel my advanc'd head  
Knock out a star in heav'n.

*Sejanus, Ben Johnson, Act V.*

A writer who has no natural elevation of mind, deviates readily into bombast: he strains above his natural powers; and the violent effort carries him beyond the bounds of propriety. Boileau expresses this happily:

L'autre à peur de ramper, il se perd dans la nue.\*

The same author, Ben Johnson, abounds in the bombast:

——— The mother,  
Th' expulsed Apicata, finds them there;  
Whom when she saw lie spread on the degrees,  
After a world of fury on herself,  
Tearing her hair, defacing of her face,  
Beating her breasts and womb, kneeling amaz'd,  
Crying to heav'n, then to them; at last  
Her drowned voice got up above her woes:  
And with such black and bitter execrations,  
{As might affright the gods, and force the sun

\* *L'art Poet. chant. I. l. 58.*



Run backward to the east ; nay, make the old  
Deformed chaos rise again t' overwhelm  
Them, (us and all the world,) she fills the air,  
Upbraids the heavens with their partial dooms,  
Defies their tyrannous powers, and demands  
What she and those poor innocents have transgress'd,  
That they must suffer such a share in vengeance.

*Sejanus, Act V. Sc. last.*

————— Lentulus, the man,  
If all our fire were out, would fetch down new  
Out of the hand of Jove ; and rivet him  
To Caucasus, should he but frown ; and let  
His own gaunt eagle fly at him to tire.

*Catiline, Act III.*

Can these, or such, be any aid to us ?  
Look as they were built to shake the world,  
Or be a moment to our enterprise ?  
A thousand such as they are, could not make  
One atom of our souls. They should be men  
Worth heaven's fear, that looking up, but thus,  
Would make Jove stand upon his guard, and draw  
Himself within his thunder ; which, amaz'd,  
He should discharge in vain, and they unhurt.  
Or, if they were, like Capaneus at Thebes,  
They should hang dead upon the highest spires  
And ask the second bolt to be thrown down.  
Why Lentulus talk you so long ? This time  
Had been enough t'have scattered all the stars,  
T' have quench'd the sun and moon, and made the world  
Despair of day, or any light but ours,

*Catiline, Act IV.*

This is the language of a madman :

*Guildford.* Give way, and let the gushing torrent come,  
Behold the tears we bring to swell the deluge,  
Till the flood rise upon the guilty world  
And make the ruin common.

*Lady Jane Grey, Act IV. near the end.*

I am sorry to observe that the following bombast stuff dropt from the pen of Dryden :



To see this fleet upon the ocean move,  
 Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies;  
 And heaven, as if there wanted lights above,  
 For tapers made two glaring comets rise.

Another species of false sublime is still more faulty than bombast ; and that is. to force elevation by introducing imaginary beings without preserving any propriety in their actions ; as if it were lawful to ascribe every extravagance and inconsistency to beings of the poet's creation. No writers are more licentious in that article than Johnson and Dryden :

Methinks I see Death and the Furies waiting  
 What we will do, and all the heaven at leisure  
 For the great spectacle. Draw then your swords :  
 And if our destiny envy our virtue  
 The honour of the day, yet let us care  
 To sell ourselves at such a price, as may  
 Undo the world to buy us, and make Fate,  
 While she tempts ours, to fear her own estate.

*Catiline, Act V.*

—————The Furies stood on hill  
 Circling the place, and trembled to see men  
 Do more than they ; whilst Piety left the field,  
 Griev'd for that side, that in so bad a cause  
 They knew not what a crime their valour was.  
 The Sun stood still, and was, behind the cloud  
 The battle made, seen sweating to drive up  
 His frighted horse, whom still the noise drove backward.

*Ibid. Act V.*

*Osmyn.* While we indulge our common happiness,  
 He is forgot by whom we all possess,  
 The brave Almanzor, to whose arms we owe  
 All that we did, and all that we shall do ;  
 Who like a tempest that outrides the wind,  
 Made a just battle ere the bodies join'd.

*Abdalla.* His victories we scarce could keep in view,  
 Or polish 'em so fast as he rough drew.

*Abdemelech.* Fate after him below with pain did move,  
 And Victory could scarce keep pace above.



Death did at length so many slain forget,  
And lost the tale, and took 'em by the great.

*Conquest of Grenada, Act II, at beginning.*

The gods of Rome fight for ye ; loud Fame calls ye,  
Pitch'd on the topless Apevine, and blows  
To all the under world, all nations  
The seas, and unfrequented deserts, where the snow dwells,  
Wakens the ruin'd monuments, and there,  
Where nothing but eternal death and sleep is,  
Informs again the dead bones.

*Beaumont and Fletcher, Bonduca, Act III. Sc. 3:*

An actor on the stage may be guilty of bombast as well as an author in his closet ; a certain manner of acting, which is grand when supported by dignity in the sentiment and force in the expression, is ridiculous where the sentiment is mean, and the expression flat.

This chapter shall be closed with some observations. When the sublime is carried to its due height, and circumscribed within proper bounds, it enchants the mind, and raises the most delightful of all emotions : the reader, engrossed by a sublime object, feels himself raised as it were to a higher rank. Considering that effect, it is not wonderful that the history of conquerors and heroes, should be universally the favourite entertainment. And this fairly accounts for what I once erroneously suspected to be a wrong bias originally in human nature ; which is, that the grossest acts of oppression and injustice scarce blemish the character of a great conqueror : we, nevertheless, warmly espouse his interest, accompany him in his exploits, and are anxious for his success : the splendour and enthusiasm of the hero, transfused into the readers, elevate their minds far above the rules of justice, and render them in a great measure insensible of the wrongs that are committed :



For in those days might only shall be admir'd,  
And valour an heroic virtue call'd ;  
To overcome in battle, and subdue  
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite  
Manslaughter, shall be held the highest pitch  
Of human glory, and for glory done  
Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerors,  
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods,  
Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.  
Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth,  
And what most merits fame in silence hid.

*Milton, b. xi.*

The irregular influence of grandeur reaches also to other matters: however good, honest, or useful, a man may be, he is not so much respected as is one of a more elevated character, though of less integrity; nor do the misfortunes of the former affect us so much as those of the latter. And I add, because it cannot be disguised, that the remorse which attends breach of engagement, is in a great measure proportioned to the figure that the injured person makes: the vows and protestations of lovers are an illustrious example; for these commonly are little regarded when made to women of inferior rank.



## CHAPTER V.

*Motion and Force.*

THAT motion is agreeable to the eye without relation to purpose or design, may appear from the amusement it gives to infants: juvenile exercises are relished chiefly on that account.

If a body in motion be agreeable, one will be apt to conclude that at rest it must be disagreeable; but we learn from experience, that this would be a rash conclusion. Rest is one of those circumstances that are neither agreeable nor disagreeable, being viewed with perfect indifferency. And happy is it for mankind to have the matter so ordered; if rest were agreeable, it would disincline us to motion, by which all things are performed: if it were disagreeable, it would be a source of perpetual uneasiness; for the bulk of the things we see, appear to be at rest. A similar instance of designing wisdom I have had occasion to explain, in opposing grandeur to littleness, and elevation to lowness of place.\* Even in the simplest matters, the finger of God is conspicuous: the happy adjustment of the internal nature of man to his external circumstances, displayed in the instances here given, is indeed admirable.

Motion is agreeable in all its varieties of quickness and slowness; but motion long continued admits some exceptions. That degree of continued motion which corresponds to the natural course of

\* See chapter IV.



our perceptions is the most agreeable. The quickest motion is for an instant delightful ; but soon appears to be too rapid : it becomes painful by forcibly accelerating the course of our perceptions. Slow continued motion becomes disagreeable from an opposite cause, that it retards the natural course of our perceptions.\*

There are other varieties in motion, beside quickness and slowness, that make it more or less agreeable : regular motion is preferred before what is irregular ; witness the motion of the planets in orbits nearly circular : the motion of the comets in orbits less regular, is less agreeable.

Motion uniformly accelerated, resembling an ascending series of numbers, is more agreeable than when uniformly retarded : motion upward is agreeable, by tendency to elevation. What then shall we say of downward motion regularly accelerated by the force of gravity, compared with upward motion regularly retarded by the same force ? Which of these is the most agreeable ? This question is not easily solved.

Motion in a straight line is agreeable : but we prefer undulating motion, as of waves, of a flame, of a ship under sail ; such motion is more free, and also more natural. Hence the beauty of a serpentine river.

The easy and sliding motion of a fluid, from the lubricity of its parts, is agreeable upon that account : but the agreeableness chiefly depends on the following circumstance, that the motion is perceived, not as of one body, but as of an endless number moving together with order and regularity. Poets, struck with that beauty, draw more images from fluids in motion than from solids.

\* This will be explained more fully afterward, chapter IX.



Force is of two kinds; one quiescent, and one exerted in motion. The former, dead weight for example, must be laid aside; for a body at rest is not, by that circumstance, either agreeable or disagreeable. Moving force only is my province; and, though it is not separable from motion, yet by the power of abstraction, either of them may be considered independent of the other. Both of them are agreeable, because both of them include activity. It is agreeable to see a thing move: to see it moved; as when it is dragged or pushed along, is neither agreeable nor disagreeable, more than when at rest. It is agreeable to see a thing exert force; but it makes not the thing either agreeable or disagreeable, to see force exerted upon it.

Though motion and force are each of them agreeable, the impressions they make are different. This difference, clearly felt, is not easily described. All we can say is, that the emotion raised by a moving body, resembling its cause, is felt as if the mind were carried along: the emotion raised by force exerted, resembling also its cause, is felt as if force were exerted within the mind.

To illustrate that difference, I give the following examples. It has been explained why smoke ascending in a calm day, suppose from a cottage in a wood, is an agreeable object;\* so remarkably agreeable, that landscape-painters introduce it upon all occasions. The ascent being natural, and without effort, is pleasant in a calm state of mind: it resembles a gently-flowing river, but is more agreeable, because ascent is more to our taste than descent. A fire-work, or a *jet d'eau*, rouses the mind more; because the beauty of force visibly exerted, is superadded to that of upward motion. To a man

\* Chapter I.



reclining indolently upon a bank of flowers, ascending smoke in a still morning is charming ; but a fire-work, or a *jet d'eau*, rouses him from that supine posture, and puts him in motion.

A *jet d'eau* makes an impression distinguishable from that of a waterfall. Downward motion being natural and without effort, tends rather to quiet the mind than to rouse it : upward motion on the contrary, overcoming the resistance of gravity, makes an impression of a great effort, and thereby rouses and enlivens the mind.

The public games of the Greeks and Romans, which gave so much entertainment to the spectators, consisted chiefly in exerting force, wrestling, leaping, throwing great stones, and such-like trials of strength. When great force is exerted, the effort felt internally is animating. The effort may be such, as in some measure to overpower the mind : thus the explosion of gunpowder, the violence of a torrent, the weight of a mountain, and the crush of an earthquake, create astonishment rather than pleasure.

No quality nor circumstance contributes more to grandeur than force, especially when exerted by sensible beings. I cannot make the observation more evident than by the following quotations.

—————Him the almighty power  
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,  
With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
In adamant chains and penal fire,  
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

*Paradise Lost, book 1.*

—————Now storming fury rose,  
And clamour such as heard in heaven till now  
Was never ; arms on armour clashing bray'd  
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels



Of brazen chariots rag'd, dire was the noise  
 Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss  
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,  
 And flying vaulted either host with fire.  
 So under fiery cope together rush'd  
 Both battles main, with ruinous assault  
 And inextinguishable rage; all heaven  
 Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth  
 Had to her centre shook.

*Ibid. book v.*

They ended parley, and both addressed for fight  
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue  
 Of angels, can relate, or to what things  
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift  
 Human imagination to such height  
 Of godlike power? for likest gods they seem'd,  
 Stood they or mov'd, in stature motion, arms,  
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heav'n.  
 Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air  
 Made horrid circles: two broad suns their shields  
 Blaz'd opposite, while Expectation stood  
 In horror: from each hand with speed retir'd,  
 Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,  
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind  
 Of such commotion; such as, to set forth  
 Great things by small, if Nature's concord broke,  
 Among the constellations war were sprung,  
 Two planets, rushing from aspect malign  
 Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky  
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.

*Ibid. book vi.*

We shall next consider the effect of motion and force in conjunction. In contemplating the planetary system, what strikes us the most, is the spherical figures of the planets, and their regular motions; the conception we have of their activity and enormous bulk being more obscure: the beauty accordingly of that system, raises a more lively emotion than its grandeur. But if we could comprehend the whole system at one view, the activity and irresistible force of these immense bodies would fill us



with amazement: nature cannot furnish another scene so grand.

Motion and force, agreeable in themselves, are also agreeable by their utility when employed as means to accomplish some beneficial end. Hence the superior beauty of some machines, where force and motion concur to perform the work of numberless hands. Hence the beautiful motions, firm and regular, of a horse trained for war: every single step is the fittest that can be, for obtaining the proposed end. But the grace of motion is visible chiefly in man, not only for the reasons mentioned, but because every gesture is significant. The power however of agreeable motion is not a common talent: every limb of the human body has an agreeable and disagreeable motion; some motions being extremely graceful, others plain and vulgar; some expressing dignity, others meanness. But the pleasure here, arising, not singly from the beauty of motion, but from indicating character and sentiment, belongs to different chapters.\*

I should conclude with the final cause of the relish we have for motion and force, were it not so evident as to require no explanation. We are placed here in such circumstances as to make industry essential to our well-being; for without industry the plainest necessities of life are not obtained. When our situation, therefore, in this world requires activity and a constant exertion of motion and force, Providence indulgently provides for our welfare by making these agreeable to us: it would be a gross imperfection in our nature, to make any thing disagreeable that we depend on for existence; and even indifference would slacken greatly that degree of activity which is indispensable.

\* Chapter XI. and XV.



## CHAPTER VI.

*Novelty, and the unexpected appearance of Objects.*

OF all the circumstances that raise emotions, not excepting beauty, nor even greatness, novelty hath the most powerful influence. A new object produceth instantaneously an emotion termed *wonder*, which totally occupies the mind, and for a time excludes all other objects. Conversation among the vulgar never is more interesting than when it turns upon strange objects and extraordinary events. Men tear themselves from their native country in search of things rare and new; and novelty converts into a pleasure, the fatigues and even perils of travelling. To what cause shall we ascribe these singular appearances? To curiosity undoubtedly, a principle implanted in human nature for a purpose extremely beneficial, that of acquiring knowledge; and the emotion of wonder, raised by new and strange objects, inflames our curiosity to know more of them. This emotion is different from *admiration*: novelty, wherever found, whether in a quality or action, is the cause of wonder; admiration is directed to the person who performs any thing wonderful.

During infancy, every new object is probably the occasion of wonder, in some degree; because, during infancy, every object at first sight is strange as well as new: but as objects are rendered familiar by custom, we cease by degrees to wonder at



new appearances, if they have any resemblance to what we are acquainted with ; for a thing must be singular as well as new, to raise our wonder. To save multiplying words, I would be understood to comprehend both circumstances when I hereafter talk of novelty.

In an ordinary train of perceptions where one thing introduces another, not a single object makes its appearance unexpectedly :\* the mind thus prepared for the reception of its objects, admits them one after another without perturbation. But when a thing breaks in unexpectedly, and without the preparation of any connexion, it raises an emotion, known by the name of *surprise*. That emotion may be produced by the most familiar object, as when one unexpectedly meets a friend who was reported to be dead ; or a man in high life lately a beggar. On the other hand, a new object, however strange, will not produce the emotion, if the spectator be prepared for the sight : an elephant in India will not surprise a traveller who goes to see one ; and yet its novelty will raise his wonder : an Indian in Britain would be much surprised to stumble upon an elephant feeding at large in the open fields : but the creature itself, to which he was accustomed, would not raise his wonder.

Surprise thus in several respects differs from wonder : unexpectedness is the cause of the former emotion ; novelty is the cause of the latter. Nor differ they less in their nature and circumstances, as will be explained by and by. With relation to one circumstance they perfectly agree ; which is, the shortness of their duration : the instantaneous production of these emotions in perfection, may contribute to that effect, in conformity

\* See chapter I.



to a general law, That things soon decay which soon come to perfection : the violence of the emotions may also contribute ; for an ardent emotion, which is not susceptible of increase, cannot have a long course. But their short duration is occasioned chiefly by that of their causes : we are soon reconciled to an object, however unexpected ; and novelty soon degenerates into familiarity.

Whether these emotions be pleasant or painful, is not a clear point. It may appear strange, that our own feelings and their capital qualities, should afford any matter for a doubt : but when we are engrossed by any emotion, there is no place for speculation ; and when sufficiently calm for speculation, it is not easy to recal the emotion with accuracy. New objects are sometimes terrible, sometimes delightful : The terror which a tiger inspires is greatest at first, and wears off gradually by familiarity : on the other hand, even women will acknowledge that it is novelty which pleases the most in a new fashion. It would be rash however to conclude, that wonder is in itself neither pleasant nor painful, but that it assumes either quality according to circumstances. An object, it is true, that hath a threatening appearance, adds to our terror by its novelty : but from that experiment it doth not follow that novelty is in itself disagreeable ; for it is perfectly consistent, that we be delighted with an object in one view, and terrified with it in another : a river in flood, swelling over its banks, is a grand and delightful object ; and yet it may produce no small degree of fear when we attempt to cross it : courage and magnanimity are agreeable ; and yet, when we view these qualities in an enemy, they serve to increase our terror. In the same manner, novelty may produce two effects clearly distinguishable from each other : it may, di-



rectly and in itself, be agreeable; and it may have an opposite effect indirectly, which is, to inspire terror: for when a new object appears in any degree dangerous, our ignorance of its powers and qualities, affords ample scope for the imagination to dress it in the most frightful colours.\* The first sight of a lion, for example, may at the same instant produce two opposite feelings, the pleasant emotion of wonder, and the painful passion of terror: the novelty of the object produces the former directly, and contributes to the latter indirectly. Thus, when the subject is analyzed, we find, that the power which novelty hath indirectly to inflame terror, is perfectly consistent with its being in every circumstance agreeable. The matter may be put in the clearest light, by adding the following circumstances. If a lion be first seen from a place of safety, the spectacle is altogether agreeable without the least mixture of terror. If, again, the first sight puts us within reach of that dangerous animal, our terror may be so great as quite to exclude any sense of novelty. But this fact proves not that wonder is painful: it proves only, that wonder may be excluded by a more powerful passion. Every man may be made certain from his own experience, that wonder raised by a new object which is inoffensive, is always pleasant; and, with respect to offensive objects, it appears from the foregoing deduction, that the same must hold as long as the spectator can attend to the novelty.

Whether surprise be in itself pleasant or painful, is a question no less intricate than the former. It is certain that surprise inflames our joy when unexpectedly we meet with an old friend, and our terror when we stumble upon any thing noxious. To

\* *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion, part ii. ess. 6.*  
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clear that question, the first thing to be remarked is, that in some instances an unexpected object overpowers the mind, so as to produce a momentary stupefaction : where the object is dangerous, or appears so, the sudden alarm it gives, without preparation, is apt totally to unhinge the mind, and for a moment, to suspend all its faculties, even thought itself ;\* in which state a man is quite helpless ; and if he move at all, is as like to run upon the danger as from it. Surprise carried to such a height, cannot be either pleasant or painful ; because the mind, during such a momentary stupefaction, is in a good measure, if not totally, insensible.

If we then inquire for the character of this emotion, it must be where the unexpected object or event produceth less violent effects. And while the mind remains sensible of pleasure and pain, is it not natural to suppose, that surprise, like wonder, should have an invariable character ? I am inclined, however, to think, that surprise has no invariable character, but assumes that of the object which raises it. Wonder being an emotion invariably raised by novelty, and being distinguishable from all other emotions, ought naturally to possess one constant character. The unexpected appearance of an object, seems not equally entitled to produce an emotion distinguishable from that which is produced by the object in its ordinary appearance : the effect it ought naturally to have, is only to swell that emotion, by making it more pleasant or more painful than it commonly is. And that conjecture is confirmed by experience, as well as by language, which is built upon experience : when a man meets a friend unexpectedly, he is said to be agreeably surprised ; and when he meets an enemy unexpectedly he is said to be disagreeably surprised. It

\* Hence the Latin names for surprise, *torpor*, *animi stupor*.



appears, then, that the sole effect of surprise is to swell the emotion raised by the object. And that effect can be clearly explained: a tide of connected perceptions glide gently into the mind, and produce no perturbation; but an object breaking in unexpectedly, sounds an alarm, rouses the mind out of its calm state, and directs its whole attention to the object, which, if agreeable, becomes doubly so. Several circumstances concur to produce that effect: on the one hand, the agitation of the mind, and its keen attention, prepare it in the most effectual manner for receiving a deep impression: on the other hand, the object, by its sudden and unforeseen appearance, makes an impression, not gradually as expected objects do; but as at one stroke with its whole force. The circumstances are precisely similar where the object is in itself disagreeable.\*

\* What the Mareschal Saxe terms *le cœur humain* is no other than fear occasioned by surprise. It is owing to that cause that an ambush is generally so destructive: intelligence of it beforehand renders it harmless. The Mareschal gives from Cæsar's Commentaries two examples of what he calls *le cœur humain*. At the siege of Amiens by the Gauls, Cæsar came up with his army, which did not exceed 7000 men, and began to intrench himself in such hurry, that the barbarians, judging him to be afraid, attacked his intrenchments with great spirit. During the time they were filling up the ditch, he issued out with his cohorts; and, by attacking them unexpectedly, struck a panic that made them fly with precipitation, not a single man offering to make a stand. At the siege of Alesia, the Gauls, infinitely superior in number, attacked the Roman lines of circumvallation, in order to raise the siege. Cæsar ordered a body of his men to march out silently, and to attack them on the one flank, while he with another body did the same on the other flank. The surprise of being attacked when they expected a defence only, put the Gauls into disorder, and gave an easy victory to Cæsar.

A third may be added, no less memorable. In the year 846, an obstinate battle was fought between Xamire, king of Leon, and Abdoulrahman, the Moorish king of Spain. After a very long conflict, the night only prevented the Arabians from obtaining a complete victory. The king of Leon, taking advantage of the darkness, retreated to a neighbouring hill, leaving the Arabians masters of the field of battle. Next morning, perceiving that he could not maintain his place for want of provisions, nor be able to draw off his men in the face of a victorious army, he ranged his men in order of battle, and, without losing a moment, marched to attack the



The pleasure of novelty is easily distinguished from that of variety : to produce the latter, a plurality of objects is necessary ; the former arises from a circumstance found in a single object. Again, where objects, whether co-existent or in succession, are sufficiently diversified, the pleasure of variety is complete, though every single object of the train be familiar : but the pleasure of novelty, directly opposite to familiarity, requires no diversification.

There are different degrees of novelty, and its effects are in proportion. The lowest degree is found in objects surveyed a second time after a long interval ; and that in this case an object takes on some appearance of novelty, is certain from experience : a large building of many parts variously adorned, or an extensive field embellished with trees, lakes, temples, statues, and other ornaments, will appear new oftener than once : the memory of an object so complex is soon lost, of its parts at least, or of their arrangement. But experience teaches, that even without any decay of remembrance, absence alone will give an air of novelty to a once familiar object ; which is not surprising, because familiarity wears off gradually by absence : thus a person with whom we have been intimate, returning after a long interval, appears like a new acquaintance : and distance of place contributes to this appearance, no less than distance of time ; a friend, for example, after a short absence in a remote country, has the same air of novelty as if he had returned after a longer interval from a place near home : the mind forms a connexion between him and the remote country, and bestows upon him the singularity of the objects he

enemy, resolving to conquer or die. The Arabians, astonished to be attacked by those who were conquered the night before, lost all heart : fear succeeded to astonishment, the panic was universal, and they all turned their backs without almost drawing a sword.



has seen. For the same reason, when two things, equally new and singular, are presented, the spectator balances between them ; but when told that one of them is the product of a distant quarter of the world, he no longer hesitates, but clings to it as the more singular. Hence the preference given to foreign luxuries, and to foreign curiosities, which appear rare in proportion to their original distance.

The next degree of novelty, mounting upward, is found in objects of which we have some information at second hand ; for description, though it contribute to familiarity, cannot altogether remove the appearance of novelty when the object itself is presented : the first sight of a lion occasions some wonder after a thorough acquaintance with the correctest pictures and statues of that animal.

A new object that bears some distant resemblance to a known species, is an instance of a third degree of novelty : a strong resemblance among individuals of the same species, prevents, almost entirely the effect of novelty, unless distance of place or some other circumstance concur ; but where the resemblance is faint, some degree of wonder is felt, and the emotion rises in proportion to the faintness of the resemblance.

The highest degree of wonder ariseth from unknown objects that have no analogy to any species we are acquainted with. Shakspeare, in a simile, introduces that species of novelty :

As glorious to the sight  
As is a winged messenger from heaven  
Unto the white up-turned wond'ring eye  
Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him  
When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,  
And sails upon the bosom of the air.

*Romeo and Juliet.*

One example of that species of novelty deserves peculiar attention ; and that is, when an object, al-



together new, is seen by one person only, and but once. These circumstances heighten remarkably the emotion: the singularity of the spectator concurs with the singularity of the object, to inflame wonder to its highest pitch.

In explaining the effects of novelty, the place a being occupies in the scale of existence, is a circumstance that must not be omitted. Novelty in the individuals of a low class is perceived with indifference, or with a very slight emotion: thus a pebble, however singular in its appearance, scarce moves our wonder. The emotion rises with the rank of the object; and, other circumstances being equal, is strongest in the highest order of existence: a stange insect affects us more than a strange vegetable; and a strange quadruped more than a strange insect.

However natural novelty may be, it is a matter of experience, that those who relish it the most are careful to conceal its influence. Love of novelty, it is true prevails in children, in idlers, and in men of shallow understanding: and yet, after all, why should one be ashamed of indulging a natural propensity? A distinction will afford a satisfactory answer. No man is ashamed of curiosity when it is indulged in order to acquire knowledge. But to prefer any thing merely because it is new, shows a mean taste, which one ought to be ashamed of: vanity is commonly at the bottom, which leads those who are deficient in taste to prefer things odd, rare, or singular, in order to distinguish themselves from others. And in fact, that appetite, as above mentioned, reigns chiefly among persons of a mean taste, who are ignorant of refined and elegant pleasures.

One final cause of wonder, hinted above, is, that this emotion is intended to stimulate our curiosity. Another, somewhat different, is, to prepare the



mind for receiving deep impressions of new objects. An acquaintance with the various things that may affect us and with their properties, is essential to our well-being: nor will a slight or superficial acquaintance be sufficient; they ought to be so deeply engraved on the mind, as to be ready for use upon every occasion. Now, in order to make a deep impression, it is wisely contrived, that things should be introduced to our acquaintance with a certain pomp and solemnity productive of a vivid emotion. When the impression is once fairly made the emotion of novelty, being no longer necessary, vanisheth almost instantaneously; never to return, unless where the impression happens to be obliterated by length of time or other means; in which case the second introduction hath nearly the same solemnity with the first.

Designing wisdom is no where more legible than in this part of the human frame. If new objects did not affect us in a very peculiar manner, their impressions would be so slight as scarce to be of any use in life: on the other hand, did objects continue to affect us as deeply as at first, the mind would be totally engrossed with them, and have no room left either for action or reflection.

The final cause of surprise is still more evident than of novelty. Self-love makes us vigilantly attentive to self-preservation; but self-love, which operates by means of reason and reflection, and impels not the mind to any particular object or from it, is a principle too cool for a sudden emergency: an object breaking in unexpectedly, affords no time for deliberation; and, in that case, the agitation of surprise comes in seasonably to rouse self-love into action: surprise gives the alarm; and if there be any appearance of danger, our whole force is instantly summoned up to shun or to prevent it.



## CHAPTER VII.

*Risible Objects.*

SUCH is the nature of man, that his powers and faculties are soon blunted by exercise. The returns of sleep, suspending all activity, are not alone sufficient to preserve him in vigour: during his waking hours, amusement by intervals is requisite to unbend his mind from serious occupation. To that end, nature hath kindly made a provision of many objects, which may be distinguished by the epithet of *risible*, because they raise in us a peculiar emotion, expressed externally by *laughter*: that emotion is pleasant: and being also mirthful, it most successfully unbends the mind, and recruits the spirits. Imagination contributes a part by multiplying such objects without end.

*Ludicrous* is a general term, signifying, as may appear from its derivation, what is playsome, sportive, or jocular. *Ludicrous*, therefore, seems the genus, of which *risible* is a species, limited as above to what makes us laugh.

However easy it may be, concerning any particular object, to say whether it be risible or not, it seems difficult, if at all practicable, to establish any general character, by which objects of that kind may be distinguished from others. Nor is that a singular case; for, upon a review, we find the same difficulty in most of the articles already handled. There is nothing more easy, viewing a particular object, than to pronounce that it is beautiful or ug-



ly, grand or little : but were we to attempt general rules for ranging objects under different classes, according to these qualities, we should be much gravelled. A separate cause increases the difficulty of distinguishing risible objects by a general character : all men are not equally affected by risible objects ; nor the same man at all times ; for in high spirits a thing will make him laugh outright, which scarce provokes a smile in a grave mood. Risible objects, however, are circumscribed within certain limits which I shall suggest, without pretending to accuracy. And, in the first place, I observe, that no object is risible but what appears slight, little, or trivial ; for we laugh at nothing that is of importance to our own interest, or to that of others. A real distress raises pity, and therefore cannot be risible ; but a slight or imaginary distress, which moves not pity, is risible. The adventure of the fulling-mills in *Don Quixote*, is extremely risible : so is the scene where Sancho, in a dark night, tumbling into a pit, and attaching himself to the side by hand and foot, hangs there in terrible dismay till the morning, when he discovers himself to be within a foot of the bottom. A nose remarkably long or short, is risible ; but to want it altogether, far from provoking laughter, raises horror in the spectator. Secondly, With respect to works both of nature and of art, none of them are risible but what are out of rule, some remarkable defect or excess ; a very long visage, for example, or a very short one. Hence nothing just, proper, decent, beautiful, proportioned, or grand, is risible.

Even from this slight sketch it will readily be conjectured, that the emotion raised by a risible object is of a nature so singular, as scarce to find place while the mind is occupied with any other passion or emotion : and the conjecture is verified



by experience ; for we scarce ever find that emotion blended with any other. One emotion I must except : and that is, contempt raised by certain improprieties : every improper act inspires us with some degree of contempt for the author ; and if an improper act be at the same time risible to provoke laughter, of which blunders and absurdities are noted instances, the two emotions of contempt and of laughter unite intimately in the mind, and produce externally what is termed a *laugh of derision* or of *scorn*. Hence objects that cause laughter may be distinguished into two kinds : they are either *risible* or *ridiculous*. A risible object is mirthful only : a ridiculous object is both mirthful and contemptible. The first raises an emotion of laughter that is altogether pleasant : the pleasant emotion of laughter raised by the other, is blended with the painful emotion of contempt ; and the mixed emotion is termed *the emotion of ridicule*. The pain a ridiculous object gives me is resented and punished by a laugh of derision. A risible object, on the other hand, gives me no pain : it is altogether pleasant by a certain sort of titillation, which is expressed externally by mirthful laughter. Ridicule will be more fully explained afterward : the present chapter is appropriated to the other emotion.

Risible objects are so common, and so well understood, that it is unnecessary to consume paper or time upon them. Take the few following examples.

*Falstaff*. I do remember him at Clement's inn, like a man made after supper of a cheese-paring. When he was naked, he was for all the world like a forked radish, with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife.

*Second Part, Henry IV. Act III. Sc. 5.*



The foregoing is of disproportion. The following examples are of slight or imaginary misfortunes.

*Falstaff.* Go fetch me a quart of sack; put a toast in't. Have I liv'd to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher's offal, and to be thrown into the Thames! Well, if I be served such another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out and butter'd and give them to a dog for a new year's gift. The rogues slid'd me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drown'd a bitch's blind puppies, fifteen i'th' litter: and you may know by my size, that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking: if the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drown'd, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow; a death that I abhor; for the water swells a man; and what a thing should I have been when I had been swelled? I should have been a mountain of mummy.  
*Merry Wives of Windsor, Act III. Sc. 15.*

*Falstaff.* Nay, you shall hear, Master Brook, what I have suffer'd to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus cramm'd in the basket, a couple of Ford's knaves, his hinds, were call'd forth by their mistress, to carry me in the name of foul clothes to Datchet-lane. They took me on their shoulders, met the jealous knave their master in the door, who ask'd them once or twice what they had in their basket. I quak'd for fear, lest the lunatic knave would have search'd it; but Fate, ordaining he should be a cuckold, held his hand. Well, on went he for a search, and away went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, Master Brook. I suffer'd the pangs of three egregious deaths; first, an intolerable fright, to be detected by a jealous rotten bell-weather; next, to be compass'd like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head; and then to be stopt in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease. Think of that, a man of my kidney; think of that, that am as subject to heat as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw; it was a miracle to 'scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stew'd in grease, like a Dutch dish, to be thrown into the Thames, and cool'd glowing hot, in that surge, like a horse shoe; think of that; being hot; think of that, Master Brook.

*Merry Wives of Windsor, Act III. Sc. 17.*



## CHAPTER VIII.

*Resemblance and Dissimilitude.*

HAVING discussed those qualities and circumstances of single objects that seem peculiarly connected with criticism, we proceed, according to the method proposed in the chapter of beauty, to the relations of objects, beginning with the relations of resemblance and dissimilitude.

The connexion that man hath with the beings around him, requires some acquaintance with their nature, their powers and their qualities, for regulating his conduct. For acquiring a branch of knowledge so essential to our well-being, motives alone of reason and interest are not sufficient: nature hath providently superadded curiosity, a vigorous propensity, which never is at rest. This propensity attaches us to every new object;\* and incites us to compare objects, in order to discover their differences and resemblances.

Resemblance among objects of the same kind, and dissimilitude among objects of different kinds, are too obvious and familiar to gratify our curiosity in any degree: its gratification lies in discovering differences among things where resemblance prevails, and resemblances where difference prevails. Thus a difference in individuals of the same kind of plants or animals is deemed a discovery; while the many particulars in which they agree are ne-

\* See chapter VI.



glected : and in different kinds, any resemblance is greedily remarked, without attending to the many particulars in which they differ.

A comparison, however, may be too far stretched. When differences or resemblances are carried beyond certain bounds, they appear slight and trivial ; and for that reason will not be relished by a man of taste : yet such propensity is there to gratify passion, curiosity in particular, that even among good writers we find many comparisons too slight to afford satisfaction. Hence the frequent instances among logicians of distinctions without any solid difference : and hence the frequent instances among poets and orators, of similes without any just resemblance. With regard to the latter, I shall confine myself to one instance, which will probably amuse the reader, being a quotation, not from a poet nor orator, but from a grave author, writing an institute of law. " Our student shall observe, that the knowledge of the law is like a deep well out of which each man draweth according to the strength of his understanding. He that reaches deepest, seeth the amiable and admirable secrets of the law, wherein I assure you the sages of the law in former times have had the deepest reach. And, as the bucket in the depth is easily drawn to the uppermost part of the water, (for *nullum elementum in suo proprio loco est grave,*) but take it from the water, it cannot be drawn up but with a great difficulty ; so, albeit beginnings of this study seem difficult, yet when the professor of the law can dive into the depth, it is delightful, easy, and without any heavy burden, so long as he keep himself in his own proper element."\* Shakspeare, with uncommon humour, ridicules



such disposition to simile-making, by putting in the mouth of a weak man a resemblance much of a piece with that now mentioned :

*Fluellen.* I think it is in Macedon where Alexander is born. I tell you, Captain, if you look in the maps of the world, I warrant that you shall find, in the comparisons between Macedon and Monmouth, that the situations, look you, is both alike. There is a river in Macedon, there is also moreover a river in Monmouth; it is called *Wye* at Monmouth, but it is out of my prains what is the name of the other river; but it is all one, 'tis as like as my fingers to my fingers, and there is salmon in both. If you mark Alexander's life well, Harry of Monmouth's life is come after it indifferent well; for there is figures in all things. Alexander, God knows, and you know, in his rages, and his furies, and his wraths, and his cholars, and his moods, and his displeasures, and his indignations: and also being a little intoxicates in his prains, did, in his ales and his angers, look you kill his pest friend Clytus.

*Gower.* Our king is not like him in that; he never kill'd any of his friends.

*Fluellen.* It is not well done, mark you now, to take the tales out of my mouth, ere it is made and finished. I speak but in figures, and comparisons of it: As Alexander kill'd his friend Clytus, being in his ales and his cups; so also Harry Monmouth, being in his right wits and his good judgments, turn'd away the fat knight with the great belly doublet; he was full of jests, and gypes, and knaveries, and mocks: I have forgot his name.

*Gower.* Sir John Falstaff.

*Fluellen.* That is he: I tell you there is good men born at Monmouth.

*King Henry V. Act IV. Sc. 13.*

Instruction, no doubt, is the chief end of comparison; but that it is not the only end will be evident from considering, that a comparison may be employed with success to put a subject in a strong point of view. A lively idea is formed of a man's courage, by likening it to that of a lion; and eloquence is exalted in our imagination, by comparing



it to a river overflowing its banks, and involving all in its impetuous course. The same effect is produced by contrast: a man in prosperity becomes more sensible of his happiness by opposing his condition to that of a person in want of bread. Thus, comparison is subservient to poetry as well as to philosophy: and, with respect to both, the foregoing observation holds equally, that resemblance among objects of the same kind, and dissimilitude among objects of different kinds, have no effect: such a comparison neither tends to gratify our curiosity, nor to set the objects compared in a stronger light: two apartments in a palace, similar in shape, size, and furniture, make separately as good a figure as when compared; and the same observation is applicable to two similar copartments in a garden: on the other hand, oppose a regular building to a fall of water, or a good picture to a towering hill, or even a little dog to a large horse, and the contrast will produce no effect. But a resemblance between objects of different kinds, and a difference between objects of the same kind, have remarkably an enlivening effect. The poets, such of them as have a just taste, draw all their similes from things that in the main differ widely from the principal subject; and they never attempt the contrast but where the things have a common genus and a resemblance in the capital circumstances: place together a large and a small sized animal of the same species, the one will appear greater, the other less, than when viewed separately: when we oppose beauty to deformity, each makes a greater figure by the comparison. We compare the dress of different nations with curiosity, but without surprise; because they have no such resemblance in the capital parts as to please us by contrasting the smaller parts. But a new cut of a sleeve or of a pocket



enchants by its novelty, and in opposition to the former fashion, raises some degree of surprise.

That resemblance and dissimilitude have an enlivening effect upon objects of sight, is made sufficiently evident : and that they have the same effect upon objects of the other senses, is also certain. Nor is that law confined to the external senses ; for characters contrasted make a greater figure by the opposition : Iago, in the tragedy of *Othello*, says,

He hath a dally beauty in his life  
That makes me ugly.

The character of a fop, and of a rough warrior, are no where more successfully contrasted than in Shakspeare :

*Hotspur.* My liege, I did deny no prisoners ;  
But I remember, when the fight was done,  
When I was dry with rage, and extreme toil,  
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword ;  
Came there a certain Lord, neat trimly dress'd,  
Fresh as a bridegroom ; and his chin new-reap'd,  
Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest-home.  
He was perfum'd like a milliner ;  
And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held  
A pouncet-box, which ever and anon  
He gave his nose ;—and still he smil'd, and talk'd :  
And as the soldiers bare dead bodies by,  
He call'd them untaught kuaves, unmannerly,  
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse  
Betwixt the wind and his nobility !  
With many holiday and lady terms  
He questioned me : among the rest, demanded  
My pris'ners, in your Majesty's behalf.  
I then all smarting with my wounds ; being gall'd  
To be so pester'd with a popinjay,  
Out of my grief, and my impatience,  
Answer'd neglectingly, I know not what :  
He should, or should not ; for he made me mad,  
To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,  
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman,  
Of guns, and drums, and wounds ; (God save the mark !)



And telling me, the sov'reignest thing on earth  
 Was parmacity, for an inward bruise;  
 And that it was great pity, so it was,  
 This villanous saltpetre should be digg'd  
 Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,  
 Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd  
 So cowardly; and but for these vile guns  
 He would himself have been a soldier.——

*First Part, Henry IV. Act I. Sc. 4.*

Passions and emotions are also inflamed by comparison. A man of high rank humbles the bystanders, even to annihilate them in their own opinion: Cæsar, beholding the statue of Alexander, was greatly mortified, that now at the age of thirty-two when Alexander died, he had not performed one memorable action.

Our opinions also are much influenced by comparison. A man whose opulence exceeds the ordinary standard, is reputed richer than he is in reality; and wisdom or weakness, if at all remarkable in an individual, is generally carried beyond the truth.

The opinion a man forms of his present distress is heightened by contrasting it with his former happiness.

Could I forget  
 What I have been, I might the better bear  
 What I am destin'd to. I'm not the first  
 That have been wretched: but to think how much  
 I have been happier.

*Southern's Innocent Adultery, Act II.*

The distress of a long journey makes even an indifferent inn agreeable: and in travelling, when the road is good, and the horseman well covered, a bad day may be agreeable by making him sensible how snug he is.

The same effect is equally remarkable, when a man opposes his condition to that of others. A ship



tossed about in a storm, makes the spectator reflect upon his own ease and security, and puts these in the strongest light :

Suave, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,  
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem :  
Non quia vexari quemquam est jucunda voluptas,  
Sed quibus ipse malis careas, quia cernere suave est.

*Lucret. l. 2. principio.*

A man in grief cannot bear mirth : it gives him a more lively notion of his unhappiness, and of course make him more unhappy. Satan contemplating the beauties of the terrestrial paradise, has the following exclamation :

With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,  
If I could joy in ought, sweet interchange  
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,  
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd;  
Rocks, dens, and caves ! but I in none of these  
Find place or refuge ; and the more I see  
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel  
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege  
Of contraries : all good to me becomes  
Bane, and in heav'n much worse would be my state.

*Paradise Lost, book ix. l. 114.*

Gaunt. All places that the eye of heaven visits,  
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.  
Teach thy necessity to reason thus :  
There is no virtue like necessity.  
Think not the King did banish thee ;  
But thou the King. Wo doth the heavier sit,  
Where it perceives it is but faintly borne.  
Go say, I sent thee forth to purchase honour ;  
And not, the King exil'd thee. Or suppose,  
Devouring pestilence hangs in our-air,  
And thou art flying to a fresher clime.  
Look what thy soul holds dear, imagine it  
To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou com'st.  
Suppose the singing birds, musicians ;  
The grass whereon thou tread'st, the presence-floor ;  
The flow'rs fair ladies ; and thy steps, no more



Than a delightful measure, or a dance.  
 For snarling Sorrow hath less power to bite  
 The man that mocks it, and sets it light.

*Bolingbroke.* Oh, who can hold a fire in his hand,  
 By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
 Or cloy the hungry edge of Appetite,  
 By bare imagination of a feast?  
 Or wallow naked in December snow,  
 By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?  
 Oh, no! the apprehension of the good  
 Gives but the greater feeling to the worse.

*King Richard II. Act I. Sc. 6.*

The appearance of danger gives sometimes pleasure, sometimes pain. A timorous person upon the battlements of a high tower, is seized with fear, which even the consciousness of security cannot dissipate. But upon one of a firm head, this situation has a contrary effect: the appearance of danger heightens, by opposition, the consciousness of security, and consequently, the satisfaction that arises from security: here the feeling resembles that above mentioned, occasioned by a ship labouring in a storm.

The effect of magnifying or lessening objects by means of comparison, is so familiar, that no philosopher has thought of searching for a cause.\* The obscurity of the object may possibly have contributed to their silence; but luckily, we discover the cause to be a principle unfolded above, which is, the influence of passion, over our opinions.† We have had occasion to see many illustrious effects of that singular power of passion; and that the magnifying or diminishing objects by means of compa-

\* Practical writers upon the fine arts will attempt any thing, being blind both to the difficulty and danger. De Piles, accounting why contrast is agreeable, says, "That it is a sort of war, which puts the opposite parties in motion." Thus, to account for an effect of which there is no doubt, any cause, however foolish, is made welcome.

† Chapter II. part v.



rison, proceeds from the same cause, will evidently appear, by reflecting in what manner a spectator is affected, when a very large animal is for the first time placed beside a very small one of the same species. The first thing that strikes the mind, is the difference between the two animals, which is so great as to occasion surprise; and this, like other emotions, magnifying its object, makes us conceive the difference to be the greatest that can be: we see, or seem to see, the one animal extremely little, and the other extremely large. The emotion of surprise arising from any unusual resemblance, serves equally to explain, why at first view we are apt to think such resemblance more entire than it is in reality. And it must not escape observation, that the circumstances of more and less, which are the proper subjects of comparison, raise a perception so indistinct and vague as to facilitate the effect described: we have no mental standard of great and little, nor of the several degrees of any attribute; and the mind thus unrestrained, is naturally disposed to indulge its surprise to the utmost extent.

In exploring the operations of the mind, some of which are extremely nice and slippery, it is necessary to proceed with the utmost caution: and after all, seldom it happens that speculations of that kind afford any satisfaction. Luckily, in the present case, our speculations are supported by facts and solid argument. First, a small object of one species opposed to a great object of another, produces not, in any degree, that deception which is so remarkable when both objects are of the same species. The greatest disparity between objects of different kinds, is so common as to be observed with perfect indifference; but such disparity between objects of the same kind, being uncommon,



never fails to produce surprise : and may we not fairly conclude, that surprise, in the latter case, is what occasions the deception, when we find no deception in the former? In the next place, if surprise be the sole cause of the deception, it follows necessarily, that the deception will vanish as soon as the objects compared become familiar. This holds so unerringly, as to leave no reasonable doubt that surprise is the prime mover : our surprise is great the first time a small lap-dog is seen with a large mastiff ; but when two such animals are constantly together, there is no surprise, and it makes no difference whether they be viewed separately or in company : we set no bounds to the riches of a man who has recently made his fortune, the surprising disproportion between his present and his past situation being carried to an extreme ; but with regard to a family that for many generations hath enjoyed great wealth, the same false reckoning is not made : it is equally remarkable, that a trite simile has no effect ; a lover compared to a moth scorching itself at the flame of a candle, originally a sprightly simile, has by frequent use lost all force ; love cannot now be compared to fire, without some degree of disgust : it has been justly objected against Homer, that the lion is too often introduced into his similies ; all the variety he is able to throw into them, not being sufficient to keep alive the reader's surprise.

To explain the influence of comparison upon the mind, I have chosen the simplest case, to wit, the first sight of two animals of the same kind, differing in size only : but to complete the theory, other circumstances must be taken in. And the next supposition I make, is where both animals, separately familiar to the spectator, are brought together for the first time. In that case, the effect of magnify-



ing and diminishing, is found remarkably greater than in that first mentioned ; and the reason will appear upon analysing the operation : the first feeling we have is of surprise at the uncommon difference of two creatures of the same species : we are next sensible, that the one appears less, the other larger, than they did formerly ; and that new circumstance, increasing our surprise, makes us imagine a still greater opposition between the animals than if we had formed no notion of them beforehand.

I shall confine myself to one other supposition ; That the spectator was acquainted beforehand with one of the animals only, the lap-dog for example. This new circumstance will vary the effect ; for instead of widening the natural difference, by enlarging in appearance the one animal, and diminishing the other in proportion, the whole apparent alteration will rest upon the lap-dog : the surprise to find it less than it appeared formerly, directs to it our whole attention, and makes us conceive it to be a most diminutive creature : the mastiff in the mean time is quite overlooked. I am able to illustrate this effect by a familiar example. Take a piece of paper, or of linen tolerably white, and compare it with a pure white of the same kind : the judgment we formed of the first object is instantly varied ; and the surprise occasioned by finding it less white than was thought, produceth a hasty conviction that it is much less white than it is in reality : withdrawing now the pure white, and putting in its place a deep black, the surprise occasioned by that new circumstance carries us to the other extreme, and makes us conceive the object first mentioned to be a pure white : and thus experience compels us to acknowledge, that our emotions have an influence even upon our eye-sight. This experi-



ment leads to a general observation, That whatever is found more strange or beautiful than was expected, is judged to be more strange or beautiful than it is in reality. Hence a common artifice; to depreciate beforehand what we wish to make a figure in the opinion of others.

The comparisons employed by poets and orators, are of the kind last mentioned; for it is always a known object that is to be magnified or lessened. The former is effected by likening it to some grand object, or by contrasting it with one of an opposite character. To effectuate the latter, the method must be reversed: the object must be contrasted with something superior to it, or likened to something inferior. The whole effect is produced upon the principal object, which by that means is elevated above its rank, or depressed below it.

In accounting for the effect that any unusual resemblance or dissimilitude hath upon the mind, no cause has been mentioned but surprise; and to prevent confusion, it was proper to discuss that cause first. But surprise is not the only cause of the effect described: another concurs which operates perhaps not less powerfully, namely, a principle in human nature that lies still in obscurity, not having been unfolded by any writer, though its effects are extensive; and as it is not distinguished by a proper name, the reader must be satisfied with the following description. Every man who studies himself or others, must be sensible of a tendency or propensity in the mind, to complete every work that is begun, and to carry things to their full perfection. There is little opportunity to display that propensity upon natural operations, which are seldom left imperfect; but in the operations of art, it hath great scope: it impels us to persevere in our own work, and to wish for the completion of what



another is doing : we feel a sensible pleasure when the work is brought to perfection ; and our pain is no less sensible when we are disappointed. Hence our uneasiness, when an interesting story is broke off in the middle, when a piece of music ends without a close, or when a building or garden is left unfinished. The same propensity operates in making collections, such as the whole works good and bad of any author. A certain person attempted to collect prints of all the capital paintings, and succeeded except as to a few. La Bruyere remarks, that an anxious search was made for these ; not for their value, but to complete the set.\*

\* The examples above given, are of things that can be carried to an end or conclusion. But the same uneasiness is perceptible with respect to things that admit not any conclusion ; witness a series that has no end, commonly called an *infinite series*. The mind moving along such a series, begins soon to feel an uneasiness, which becomes more and more sensible, in continuing its progress without hope of an end.

An unbounded prospect doth not long continue agreeable : we soon feel a slight uneasiness, which increases with the time we bestow upon the prospect. An avenue without a terminating object, is one instance of an unbounded prospect ; and we might hope to find the cause of its disagreeableness, if it resembled an infinite series. The eye indeed promises no resemblance ; for the sharpest eye commands but a certain length of space, and there it is bounded, however obscurely. But the mind perceives things as they exist ; and the line is carried on in idea without end ; in which respect an unbounded prospect is similar to an infinite series. In fact, the uneasiness of an unbounded prospect, differs very little in its feeling from that of an infinite series ; and therefore we may reasonably presume, that both proceed from the same cause.

We next consider a prospect unbounded every way, as, for example, a great plain or the ocean, viewed from an eminence. We feel here an uneasiness occasioned by the want of an end or termination, precisely as in the other cases. A prospect unbounded every way, is indeed so far singular, as at first to be more pleasant than a prospect that is unbounded in one direction only, and afterward to be more painful. But these circumstances are easily explained, without wounding the general theory. the pleasure we feel at first, is a vivid emotion of grandeur, arising from the immense extent of the object : and to increase the pain we feel afterward for the want of a termination, there concurs a pain of a different kind occasioned by stretching the eye to comprehend so wide a prospect ; a pain that gradually increases with the repeated efforts we make to grasp the whole.



The final cause of the propensity is an additional proof of its existence : human works are of no significance till they be completed ; and reason is not always a sufficient counterbalance to indolence : some principle over and above is necessary, to excite our industry, and to prevent our stopping short in the middle of the course.

We need not lose time to describe the co-operation of the foregoing propensity with surprise, in producing the effect that follows any unusual resemblance or dissimilitude. Surprise first operates, and carries our opinion of the resemblance or dissimilitude beyond truth. The propensity we have been describing carries us still farther ; for it forces upon the mind a conviction, that the resemblance or dissimilitude is complete. We need no better illustration, than the resemblance that is fancied in some pebbles to a tree or an insect ; which resemblance, however faint in reality, is conceived to be wonderfully perfect. The tendency to complete a resemblance acting jointly with surprise, carries the mind sometimes so far, as even to presume upon future events. In the Greek tragedy entitled *Phœnices*, those unhappy women, seeing the place where it was intended they should be slain, cried out with anguish, "They now saw their cruel destiny had condemned them to die in that place, being the same where they had been exposed in their infancy."\*

The propensity to advance every thing to its perfection, not only co-operates with surprise to

It is the same principle, if I mistake not, which operates imperceptibly with respect to quantity and number. Another's property indented into my field, gives me uneasiness ; and I am eager to make the purchase, not for profit, but in order to square my field. Xerxes and his army, in their passage to Greece, were sumptuously entertained by Pythius the Lydian : Xerxes recompensed him with 7000 Daries, which he wanted to complete the sum of four millions.

\* Aristotle, Poet. cap. 17.



deceive the mind, but of itself is able to produce that effect. Of this we see many instances where there is no place for surprise; and the first I shall give is of resemblance. *Unumquodque eodem modo dissolvitur quo colligatum est*, is a maxim in the Roman law that has no foundation in truth; for tying and loosing, building, and demolishing, are acts opposite to each other, and are performed by opposite means: but when these acts are connected by their relation to the same subject, their connexion leads us to imagine a sort of resemblance between them, which by the foregoing propensity is conceived to be as complete as possible. The next instance shall be of contrast. Addison observes, "That the palest features look the most agreeable in white; that a face which is overflushed appears to advantage in the deepest scarlet; and that a dark complexion is not a little alleviated by a black hood."\* The foregoing propensity serves to account for these appearances; to make which evident, one of the cases shall suffice. A complexion, however dark, never approaches to black: when these colours appear together, their opposition strikes us: and the propensity we have to complete the opposition makes the darkness of complexion vanish out of sight.

The operation of this propensity, even where there is no ground for surprise, is not confined to opinion or conviction: so powerful it is, as to make us sometimes proceed to action, in order to complete a resemblance or dissimilitude. If this appear obscure, it will be made clear by the following instances. Upon what principle is the *lex talionis* founded, other than to make the punishment resemble the mischief? Reason dictates, that there

\* Spectator, No. 265.



ought to be a conformity or resemblance between a crime and its punishment: and the foregoing propensity impels us to make the resemblance as complete as possible. Titus Livius, under the influence of that propensity, accounts for a certain punishment by a resemblance between it and the crime, too subtle for common apprehension. Treating of Mettus Fuffetius, the Alban general who, for treachery to the Romans his allies, was sentenced to be torn in pieces by horses, he puts the following speech in the mouth of Tullus Hostilius, who decreed the punishment. "Mette Fuffeti, inquit, si ipse discere posses fidem ac fœdera servare, vivo tibi ea disciplina a me adhibita esset. Nunc, quoniam tuum insanabile ingenium est, at tu tuo supplicio doce humanum genus, ea sancta credere, quæ a te violata sunt. Ut igitur paulo ante animum inter Fidenatem Romanamque rem ancipitem gessisti, ita jam corpus passim distrahendum dabis."\* By the same influence, the sentence is often executed upon the very spot where the crime was committed. In the *Electra* of Sophocles, Egistheus is dragged from the theatre into an inner room of the supposed palace, to suffer death where he murdered Agamemnon. Shakspeare, whose knowledge of nature is no less profound than extensive, has not overlooked this propensity:

*Othello.* Get me some poison, Iago, this night; I'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and her beauty unprovoke my mind again; this night, Iago.

*Iago.* Do it not with poison; strangle her in bed, even in the bed she hath contaminated.

*Othello.* Good, good: The justice of it pleases; very good.

*Othello, Act IV. Sc. 5.*

\* Lib. i. sect. 22.



*Warwick.* From off the gates of York fetch down the head,  
Your father's head, which Clifford placed there.  
Instead whereof let his supply the room.  
Measure for measure must be answered.

*Third Part of Henry VI. Act II. Sc. 3.*

Persons in their last moments are generally seized with an anxiety to be buried with their relations. In the *Amynta* of Tasso, the lover, hearing that his mistress was torn to pieces by a wolf, expresses a desire to die the same death.\*

Upon the subject in general I have two remarks to add. The first concerns resemblance, which, when too entire, hath no effect, however different in kind the things compared may be. The remark is applicable to works of art only; for natural objects of different kinds have scarce even an entire resemblance. To give an example in a work of art, marble is a sort of matter very different from what composes an animal; and marble cut into a human figure produces great pleasure by the resemblance; but, if a marble statue be coloured like a picture, the resemblance is so entire, as at a distance to make the statue appear a person: we discover the mistake when we approach; and no other emotion is raised, but surprise occasioned by the deception: The figure still appears a real person, rather than an imitation; and we must use reflection to correct the mistake. This cannot happen in a picture; for the resemblance can never be so entire as to disguise the imitation.

The other remark relates to contrast. Emotions make the greatest figure when contrasted in succession: but the succession ought neither to be rapid, nor immoderately slow: if too slow, the effect of contrast becomes faint by the distance of the emo-

\* Act IV. Sc. 2



tions ; and if rapid, no single emotion has room to expand itself to its full size, but is stifled; as it were, in the birth, by a succeeding emotion. The funeral oration of the Bishop of Meaux, upon the Duchess of Orleans, is a perfect hodge-podge of cheerful and melancholy representations, following each other in the quickest succession: opposite emotions are best felt in succession; but each emotion separately should be raised to its due pitch, before another be introduced.

What is above laid down, will enable us to determine a very important question concerning emotions raised by the fine arts; namely, Whether ought similar emotions to succeed each other, or dissimilar? The emotions raised by the fine arts are for the most part too nearly related to make a figure by resemblance; and for that reason their succession ought to be regulated as much as possible by contrast. This holds confessedly in epic and dramatic compositions; and the best writers, led, perhaps, by taste more than by reasoning, have generally aimed at that beauty. It holds equally in music: in the same cantata, all the variety of emotions that are within the power of music may not only be indulged, but, to make the greatest figure, ought to be contrasted. In gardening, there is an additional reason for the rule: the emotions raised by that art are at best so faint, that every artifice should be employed to give them their utmost vigour: a field may be laid out in grand, sweet, gay, neat, wild, melancholy scenes; and when these are viewed in succession, grandeur ought to be contrasted with neatness, regularity with wildness, and gaiety with melancholy, so as that each emotion may succeed its opposite: nay, it is an improvement to intermix in the succession rude uncultivated spots as well as unbounded



views, which in themselves are disagreeable, but in succession heighten the feeling of the agreeable objects; and we have nature for our guide, which in her most beautiful landscapes often intermixes rugged rocks, dirty marshes, and barren stony heaths. The greatest masters of music have the same view in their compositions: the second part of an Italian song seldom conveys any sentiment; and, by its harshness, seems purposely contrived to give a greater relish for the interesting parts of the composition.

A small garden comprehended under a single view, affords little opportunity for that embellishment. Dissimilar emotions require different tones of mind; and therefore in conjunction can never be pleasant: \* gaiety and sweetness may be combined, or wildness and gloominess; but a composition of gaiety and gloominess is distasteful. The rude uncultivated compartment of furze and broom in Richmond garden hath a good effect in the succession of objects; but a spot of that nature would be insufferable in the midst of a polished parterre or flower-plot. A garden, therefore, if not of great extent, admits not dissimilar emotions; and in ornamenting a small garden, the safest course is to confine it to a single expression. For the same reason, a landscape ought also to be confined to a single expression; and accordingly it is a rule in painting, that if the subject be gay, every figure ought to contribute to that emotion.

It follows from the foregoing train of reasoning, that a garden near a great city ought to have an air of solitude. The solitariness again of a waste country ought to be contrasted in forming a garden; no temples, no obscure walks; but *jets d'eau*, cas-

\* See Chapter II. Part iv.



cares, objects active, gay, and splendid. Nay, such a garden should in some measure avoid imitating nature, by taking on an extraordinary appearance of regularity and art, to show the busy hand of man, which in a waste country has a fine effect by contrast.

It may be gathered from what is said above,\* that wit and ridicule make not an agreeable mixture with grandeur. Dissimilar emotions have a fine effect in a slow succession; but in a rapid succession, which approaches to co-existence, they will not be relished: in the midst of a laboured and elevated description of a battle, Virgil introduces a ludicrous image, which is certainly out of its place:

Obvius ambustum torrem Chorinæus ab ara  
Corripit, venienti Ebuso plagamque ferenti  
Occupat os flammis: illi ingens barba reluxit,  
Nidoremque ambusta dedit.

*Æneid*, vii. 298.

The following image is no less ludicrous, nor less improperly placed:

Mentre fan questi i bellici stromenti  
Perche debbiano tosto in uso porae,  
Il gran nemico de l'humane genti  
Contra i Christiani i lividi occhi torse:  
E tor veggendo à le bell' opre intenti,  
Ambo le labra per furor si morse:  
E qual tauro ferito, il suo dolore  
Verso mugghiando e sospirando fuore.

*Gerusal. cant.* iv. st. 1.

It would, however, be too austere to banish altogether ludicrous images from an epic poem. This

\* Chapter II. part iv.



poem doth not always soar above the clouds: it admits great variety; and upon occasion can descend even to the ground without sinking. In its more familiar tones, a ludicrous scene may be introduced without impropriety. This is done by Virgil\* in a foot-race; the circumstances of which, not excepting the ludicrous part, are copied from Homer.† After a fit of merriment, we are, it is true, the less disposed to the serious and sublime: but then, a ludicrous scene, by unbending the mind from severe application to more interesting subjects may prevent fatigue, and preserve our relish entire.

\* Æn. lib. v.

† Iliad, book xxiii. l. 789.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### *Uniformity and Variety.*

IN attempting to explain uniformity and variety, in order to show how we are affected by these circumstances, a doubt occurs, what method ought to be followed. In adhering close to the subject, I foresee difficulties; and yet by indulging such a circuit as may be necessary for a satisfactory view, I probably shall incur the censure of wandering.—Yet the dread of censure ought not to prevail over what is proper: beside that the intended circuit will lead to some collateral matters, that are not only curious, but of considerable importance in the science of human nature.



The necessary succession of perceptions may be examined in two different views ; one with respect to order and connexion, and one with respect to uniformity and variety.\* In the first view it is handled above :† and I now proceed to the second. The world we inhabit is replete with things no less remarkable for their variety than for their number : these, unfolded by the wonderful mechanism of external sense, furnish the mind with many perceptions ; which, joined with ideas of memory, of imagination, and of reflection, form a complete train that has not a gap or interval. This train of perceptions and ideas depends very little on will. The mind, as has been observed,‡ is so constituted, “ That it can by no effort break off the “ succession of its ideas, nor keep its attention “ long fixed upon the same object :” we can arrest a perception in its course ; we can shorten its natural duration, to make room for another ; we can vary the succession, by change of place or of amusement ; and we can in some measure prevent variety, by frequently recalling the same object after short intervals : but still there must be a succession, and a change from one perception to another. By artificial means, the succession may be retarded or accelerated, may be rendered more various or more uniform, but in one shape or another is unavoidable.

The train, even when left to its ordinary course, is not always uniform in its motion ; there are natural causes that accelerate or retard it considerably. The first I shall mention, is a peculiar constitution of mind. One man is distinguished from another, by no circumstance more remarkably, than his train of perceptions : to a cold languid temper

\* Chapter I.

† Locke, book ii. chap. 14.



belongs a slow course of perceptions, which occasions a dullness of apprehension and sluggishness in action: to a warm temper, on the contrary, belongs a quick course of perceptions, which occasions quickness of apprehension and activity in business. The Asiatic nations, the Chinese especially, are observed to be more cool and deliberate than the Europeans: may not the reason be, that heat enervates by exhausting the spirits? and that a certain degree of cold, as in the middle regions of Europe, bracing the fibres, rouseth the mind, and produceth a brisk circulation of thought, accompanied with vigour in action? In youth is observable a quicker succession of perceptions than in old age: and hence, in youth a remarkable avidity for variety of amusements, which in riper years give place to more uniform and more sedate occupation. This qualifies men of middle age for business, where activity is required, but with a greater proportion of uniformity than variety. In old age, a slow and languid succession makes variety unnecessary; and for that reason, the aged, in all their motions, are generally governed by an habitual uniformity. Whatever be the cause, we may venture to pronounce, that heat in the imagination and temper, is always connected with a brisk flow of perceptions.

The natural rate of succession, depends also in some degree, upon the particular perceptions that compose the train. An agreeable object, taking a strong hold of the mind, occasions a slower succession than when the objects are indifferent: grandeur and novelty fix the attention for a considerable time, excluding all other ideas: and the mind thus occupied is sensible of no vacuity. Some emotions, by hurrying the mind from object to object, accelerate the succession. Where the train is com-



possession of connected perceptions or ideas, the succession is quick; for it is so ordered by nature, that the mind goes easily and sweetly along connected objects.\* On the other hand, the succession must be slow, where the train is composed of unconnected perceptions or ideas, which find not ready access to the mind; and that an unconnected object is not admitted without a struggle, appears from the unsettled state of the mind for some moments after such an object is presented, wavering between it and the former train: during that short period one or other of the former objects will intrude, perhaps oftener than once, till the attention be fixt entirely upon the new object. The same observations are applicable to ideas suggested by language: the mind can bear a quick succession of related ideas; but an unrelated idea, for which the mind is not prepared, takes time to make an impression; and therefore a train composed of such ideas, ought to proceed with a slow pace. Hence an epic poem, a play, or any story connected in all its parts, may be perused in a shorter time, than a book of maxims or apothegms, of which a quick succession creates both confusion and fatigue.

Such latitude hath nature indulged in the rate of succession: what latitude it indulges with respect to uniformity, we proceed to examine. The uniformity or variety of a train, so far as composed of perceptions, depends on the particular objects that surround the percipient at the time. The present occupation must also have an influence; for one is sometimes engaged in a multiplicity of affairs, sometimes altogether vacant. A natural train of ideas of memory is more circumscribed, each object being, by some connexion, linked to what precedes

\* See Chapter I.



and to what follows it: these connexions, which are many, and of different kinds, afford scope for a sufficient degree of variety; and at the same time prevent that degree which is unpleasant by excess. Temper and constitution also have an influence here, as well as upon the rate of succession: a man of a calm and sedate temper, admits not willingly any idea but what is regularly introduced by a proper connexion; one of a roving disposition embraces with avidity every new idea, however slender its relation be to those that preceded it. Neither must we overlook the nature of the perceptions that compose the train; for their influence is no less with respect to uniformity and variety, than with respect to the rate of succession. The mind engrossed by any passion, love or hatred, hope or fear, broods over its object, and can bear no interruption; and in such a state, the train of perceptions must not only be slow, but extremely uniform. Anger newly inflamed eagerly grasps its object, and leaves not a cranny in the mind for another thought but of revenge. In the character of Hotspur, that state of mind is represented to the life; a picture remarkable for likeness as well as for high colouring,

*Worcester.* Peace, cousin, say no more.

And now I will unclasp a secret book,  
And to your quick conceiving discontents  
I'll read you matter, deep and dangerous;  
As full of peril and advent'rous spirit  
As to e'erwalk a current roaring loud,  
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.

*Hotspur.* If he fall in, good night. Or sink or swim,  
Send danger from the east into the west,  
So honour cross it from the north to south;  
And let them grapple. Oh! the blood more stirs  
To rouse a lion than to start a hare.



*Worcester.* Those same noble Scots,  
That are your prisoners——

*Hotspur.* I'll keep them all ;  
By Heav'n, he shall not have a Scot of them :  
No ; if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not ;  
I'll keep them, by this hand.

*Worcester.* You start away.  
And lend no ear unto my purposes :  
Those pris'ners you shall keep.

*Hotspur.* I will, that's flat :  
He said he would not ransom Mortimer :  
Forbade my tongue to speak of Mortimer ;  
But I will find him when he lies asleep,  
And in his ear I'll holla *Mortimer* !  
Nay, I will have a starling taught to speak  
Nothing but *Mortimer*, and give it him,  
To keep his anger still in motion.

*Worcester.* Hear you, cousin, a word.

*Hotspur.* All studies here I solemnly defy,  
Save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke ;  
And that same sword-and-buckler Prince of Wales,  
(But that I think his father loves him not,  
And would be glad he met with some mischance,)  
I'd have him poison'd with a pot of ale.

*Worcester.* Farewell, my kinsman, I will talk to you  
When you are better temper'd to attend.

*King Henry IV. Act I. Sc. 4.*

Having viewed a train of perceptions as directed by nature, and the variations it is susceptible of from different necessary causes, we proceed to examine how far it is subjected to will ; for that this faculty hath some influence, is observed above. And first, the rate of succession may be retarded by insisting upon one object, and propelled by dismissing another before its time. But such voluntary mutations in the natural course of succession, have limits that cannot be extended by the most painful efforts : which will appear from considering, that the mind circumscribed in its capacity, cannot, at the same instant admit many perceptions ; and when replete, that it hath not place



for new perceptions, till others are removed ; consequently, that a voluntary change of perceptions cannot be instantaneous, as the time it requires sets bounds to the velocity of succession. On the other hand, the power we have to arrest a flying perception, is equally limited : and the reason is, that the longer we detain any perception, the more difficulty we find in the operation ; till, the difficulty becoming insurmountable, we are forced to quit our hold, and to permit the train to take its usual course.

The power we have over this train as to uniformity and variety, is in some cases very great, in others very little. A train composed of perceptions of external objects, depends entirely on the place we occupy, and admits not more nor less variety but by change of place. A train composed of ideas of memory, is still less under our power ; because we cannot at will call up any idea that is not connected with the train.\* But a train of ideas suggested by reading, may be varied at will, provided we have books at hand.

The power that nature hath given us over our train of perceptions, may be greatly strengthened by proper discipline, and by an early application to business ; witness some mathematicians, who go far beyond common nature in slowness and uniformity ; and still more persons devoted to religious exercises, who pass whole days in contemplation, and impose upon themselves long and severe penances. With respect to celerity and variety, it is not easily conceived what length a habit of activity in affairs will carry some men. Let a stranger, or let any person to whom the sight is not familiar, attend the Chancellor of Great Britain through the labours but of one day, during a session of Parliament : how great will be his astonish-



ment! what multiplicity of law business, what deep thinking, and what elaborate application to matters of government! The train of perceptions must in that great man be accelerated far beyond the ordinary course of nature: yet no confusion or hurry; but in every article the greatest order and accuracy. Such is the force of habit. How happy is man, to have the command of a principle of action that can elevate him so far above the ordinary condition of humanity!\*

We are now ripe for considering a train of perceptions, with respect to pleasure and pain: and to that speculation peculiar attention must be given, because it serves to explain the effects that uniformity and variety have upon the mind. A man, when his perceptions flow in their natural course, feels himself free, light, and easy, especially after any forcible acceleration or retardation. On the other hand, the accelerating or retarding the natural course, excites a pain, which, though scarcely felt in small removes, becomes considerable toward the extremes. Aversion to fix on a single object for a long time, or to take in a multiplicity of objects in a short time, is remarkable in children; and equally so in men unaccustomed to business: a man languishes when the succession is very slow; and, if he grow not impatient, is apt to fall asleep: during a rapid succession, he hath a feeling as if his head were turning round; he is fatigued, and his pain resembles that of weariness after bodily labour.

But a moderate course will not satisfy the mind, unless the perceptions be also diversified: number without variety is not sufficient to constitute an agreeable train. In comparing a few objects, uniformity is pleasant; but the frequent reiteration of

\* This chapter was composed in the year 1753.



uniform objects becomes unpleasant : one tires of a scene that is not diversified ; and soon feels a sort of unnatural restraint when confined within a narrow range, whether occasioned by a retarded succession, or by too great uniformity. An excess in variety is, on the other hand, fatiguing : which is felt even in a train of related perceptions, much more of unrelated perceptions, which gain not admittance without effort : the effort, it is true, is scarce perceptible in a single instance ; but by frequent reiteration it becomes exceedingly painful. Whatever be the cause, the fact is certain, that a man never finds himself more at ease, than when his perceptions succeed each other with a certain degree, not only of velocity, but also of variety. The pleasure that arises from a train of connected ideas, is remarkable in a reverie ; especially where the imagination interposeth, and is active in coining new ideas, which is done with wonderful facility : one must be sensible, that the serenity and ease of the mind in that state, makes a great part of the enjoyment. The case is different where external objects enter into the train ; for these, making their appearance without order, and without connexion, save that of contiguity, form a train of perceptions that may be extremely uniform or extremely diversified ; which, for opposite reasons, are both of them painful.

To alter, by an act of will, that degree of variety which nature requires, is not less painful, than to alter that degree of velocity which it requires. Contemplation, when the mind is long attached to one subject, becomes painful by restraining the free range of perception : curiosity, and the prospect of useful discoveries, may fortify one to bear that pain : but it is deeply felt by the bulk of mankind, and produceth in them aversion to all abstract.



sciences. In any profession or calling, a train of operation that is simple and reiterated without intermission, makes the operator languish, and lose vigour : he complains neither of too great labour, nor of too little action ; but regrets the want of variety, and the being obliged to do the same thing over and over : where the operation is sufficiently varied, the mind retains its vigour, and is pleased with its condition. Actions again create uneasiness when excessive in number or variety, though in every other respect pleasant : thus a throng of business in law, in physic, or in traffic, distresses and distracts the mind, unless where a habit of application is acquired by long and constant exercise : the excessive variety is the distressing circumstance ; and the mind suffers grievously by being kept constantly upon the stretch.

With relation to involuntary causes disturbing that degree of variety which nature requires, a slight pain affecting one part of the body without variation, becomes, by its constancy and long duration, almost insupportable : the patient, sensible that the pain is not increased in degree, complains of its constancy more than of its severity, of its engrossing his whole thoughts, and admitting no other object. A shifting pain is more tolerable, because change of place contributes to variety : and an intermitting pain, suffering other objects to intervene, still more so. Again, any single colour or sound, often returning becomes unpleasant ; as may be observed in viewing a train of similar apartments in a great house painted with the same colour, and in hearing the prolonged tollings of a bell. Colour and sound varied within certain limits, though without any order, are pleasant ; witness the various colours of plants and flowers in a field, and the various notes of birds in a thicket :



increase the number of variety, and the feeling becomes unpleasant; thus a great variety of colours, crowded upon a small canvass, or in quick succession, create an uneasy feeling, which is prevented by putting the colours at a greater distance from each other, either of place or of time. A number of voices in a crowded assembly, a number of animals collected in a market, produce an unpleasant feeling; though a few of them together, or all of them in a moderate succession, would be pleasant. And because of the same excess in variety, a number of pains felt in different parts of the body, at the same instant or in a rapid succession, are an exquisite torture.

The pleasure or pain resulting from a train of perceptions in different circumstances, are a beautiful contrivance of nature for valuable purposes. But being sensible, that the mind, inflamed with speculations so highly interesting, is beyond measure disposed to conviction; I shall be watchful to admit no argument or remark, but what appears solidly founded; and with that caution I proceed to unfold these purposes. It is occasionally observed above, that persons of a phlegmatic temperament, having a sluggish train of perceptions, are indisposed to action; and that activity constantly accompanies a brisk flow of perceptions. To ascertain that fact, a man need not go abroad for experiments: reflecting on things passing in his own mind, he will find, that a brisk circulation of thought constantly prompts him to action; and that he is averse to action when his perceptions languish in their course. But as man by nature is formed for action, and must be active in order to be happy, nature hath kindly provided against indolence, by annexing pleasure to a moderate course of perceptions, and by making any remarkable re-



tardation painful. A slow course of perceptions is attended with another bad effect; man, in a few capital cases, is governed by propensity or instinct; but in matters that admit deliberation and choice, reason is assigned him for a guide: now, as reasoning requires often a great compass of ideas, their succession ought to be so quick as readily to furnish every motive that may be necessary for mature deliberation; in a languid succession, motives will often occur after action is commenced, when it is too late to retreat.

Nature hath guarded man, her favourite, against a succession too rapid, no less carefully than against one too slow: both are equally painful, though the pain is not the same in both. Many are the good effects of that contrivance. In the first place, as the exertion of bodily faculties is by certain painful sensations confined within proper limits, Nature is equally provident with respect to the nobler faculties of the mind: the pain of an accelerated course of perceptions, is Nature's admonition to relax our pace, and to admit a more gentle exertion of thought. Another valuable purpose is discovered upon reflecting in what manner objects are imprinted on the mind: to give the memory firm hold of an external object, time is required, even where attention is the greatest; and a moderate degree of attention, which is the common case, must be continued still longer to produce the same effect: a rapid succession, accordingly, must prevent objects from making an impression so deep as to be of real service in life; and Nature, for the sake of memory, has, by a painful feeling, guarded against a rapid succession. But a still more valuable purpose is answered by the contrivance; as, on the one hand, a sluggish course of perceptions indisposeth to action; so, on the other, a course



too rapid impels to rash and precipitant action: prudent conduct is the child of deliberation and clear conception, for which there is no place in a rapid course of thought. Nature therefore, taking measures for prudent conduct, has guarded us effectually from precipitancy of thought by making it painful.

Nature not only provides against a succession too slow or too quick, but makes the middle course extremely pleasant. Nor is that course confined within narrow bounds; every man can naturally, without pain, accelerate or retard in some degree the rate of his perceptions. And he can do it in a still greater degree by the force of habit: a habit of contemplation annihilates the pain of a retarded course of perceptions; and a busy life, after long practice, makes acceleration pleasant.

Concerning the final cause of our taste for variety, it will be considered, that human affairs, complex by variety as well as number, require the distributing our attention and activity in measure and proportion. Nature therefore, to secure a just distribution corresponding to the variety of human affairs, has made too great uniformity or too great variety in the course of perceptions, equally unpleasant: and indeed, were we addicted to either extreme, our internal constitution would be ill suited to our external circumstances. At the same time, where great uniformity of operation is required; as in several manufactures, or great variety, as in law or physic, Nature, attentive to all our wants, hath also provided for these cases, by implanting in the breast of every person, an efficacious principle that leads to habit: an obstinate perseverance in the same occupation, relieves from the pain of excessive uniformity; and the like perseverance in a quick circulation of different occu-



ceptions, relieves from the pain of excessive variety, And thus we come to take delight in several occupations, that by nature, without habit, are not a little disgusting.

A middle rate also in the train of perceptions between uniformity and variety, is no less pleasant than between quickness and slowness. The mind of man, so framed, is wonderfully adapted to the course of human affairs, which are continually changing, but not without connexion: it is equally adapted to the acquisition of knowledge, which results chiefly from discovering resemblances among differing objects, and differences among resembling objects: such occupation, even abstracting from the knowledge we acquire, is in itself delightful, by preserving a middle rate between too great uniformity and too great variety.

We are now arrived at the chief purpose of the present chapter; which is to consider uniformity and variety with relation to the fine arts, in order to discover if we can, when it is that the one ought to prevail, and when the other. And the knowledge we have obtained, will even at first view suggest a general observation, That in every work of art, it must be agreeable, to find that degree of variety which corresponds to the natural course of our perceptions; and that an excess in variety or in uniformity must be disagreeable, by varying that natural course. For that reason, works of art admit more or less variety according to the nature of the subject: in a picture of an interesting event that strongly attaches the spectator to a single object, the mind relisheth not a multiplicity of figures nor of ornaments: a picture representing a gay subject, admits great variety of figures and ornaments; because these are agreeable to the mind in a cheer-



ful tone. The same observation is applicable to poetry and to music.

It must at the same time be remarked, that one can bear a greater variety of natural objects, than of objects in a picture ; and a greater variety in a picture, than in a description. A real object presented to view, makes an impression more readily than when represented in colours, and much more readily than when represented in words. Hence it is, that the profuse variety of objects in some natural landscapes, neither breed confusion nor fatigue : and for the same reason, there is place for greater variety of ornament in a picture than in a poem. A picture, however, like a building, ought to be so simple as to be comprehended in one view. Whether every one of Le Brun's pictures of Alexander's history will stand this test, is submitted to judges.

From these general observations, I proceed to particulars. In works exposed continually to public view, variety ought to be studied. It is a rule accordingly in sculpture, to contrast the different limbs of a statue, in order to give it all the variety possible. Though the cone, in a single view, be more beautiful than the pyramid ; yet a pyramidal steeple, because of its variety, is justly preferred. For the same reason, the oval is preferred before the circle ; and painters, in copying buildings or any regular work, give an air of variety, by representing the subject in an angular view : we are pleased with the variety, without losing sight of the regularity. In a landscape representing animals, those, especially of the same kind, contrast ought to prevail : to draw one sleeping, another awake ; one sitting, another in motion ; one moving toward the spectator, another from him, is the life of such a performance.



In every sort of writing intended for amusement, variety is necessary in proportion to the length of the work. Want of variety is sensibly felt in Davila's history of the civil wars of France: the events are indeed important and various; but the reader languishes by a tiresome monotony of character, every person engaged being figured a consummate politician, governed by interest only. It is hard to say, whether Ovid disgusts more by too great variety, or to great uniformity: his stories are all of the same kind, concluding invariably with the transformation of one being into another; and so far he is tiresome by excess in uniformity: he is not less fatiguing by excess in variety, hurrying his reader incessantly from story to story. Ariosto is still more fatiguing than Ovid, by exceeding the just bounds of variety: not satisfied, like Ovid, with a succession in his stories, he distracts the reader, by jumbling together a multitude of them without any connexion. Nor is the Orlando Furioso less tiresome by its uniformity than the Metamorphoses, though in a different manner: after a story is brought to a crisis, the reader intent on the catastrophe, is suddenly snatched away to a new story, which makes no impression so long as the mind is occupied with the former. This tantalising method, from which the author never once swerves during the course of a long work, beside its uniformity, has another bad effect: it prevents that sympathy, which is raised by an interesting event when the reader meets with no interruption.

The emotions produced by our perceptions in a train, have been little considered, and less understood; the subject therefore required an elaborate discussion. It may surprise some readers to find variety treated as only contributing to make a train



of perceptions pleasant, when it is commonly held to be a necessary ingredient in beauty of whatever kind; according to the definition, "That beauty consists in uniformity amid variety." But, after the subject is explained and illustrated as above, I presume it will be evident, that this definition, however applicable to one or other species, is far from being just with respect to beauty in general: variety contributes no share to the beauty of a moral action, nor of a mathematical theorem: and numberless are the beautiful objects of sight that have little or no variety in them; a globe, the most uniform of all figures, is of all the most beautiful; and a square, though more beautiful than a trapezium, hath less variety in its constituent parts. The foregoing definition, which at best is but obscurely expressed, is only applicable to a number of objects in a group or in succession, among which indeed a due mixture of uniformity and variety is always agreeable; provided the particular objects, separately considered, be in any degree beautiful, for uniformity amid variety among ugly objects, affords no pleasure. This circumstance is totally omitted in the definition: and indeed to have mentioned it, would at the very first glance have shown the definition to be imperfect: for to define beauty as arising from beautiful objects blended together in a due proportion of uniformity and variety, would be too gross to pass current; as nothing can be more gross, than to employ in a definition the very term that is to be explained.



## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IX.

*Concerning the Works of Nature, chiefly with respect to Uniformity and Variety.*

IN things of Nature's workmanship, whether we regard their internal or external structure, beauty and design are equally conspicuous. We shall begin with the outside of nature, as what first presents itself.

The figure of an organic body is generally regular. The trunk of a tree, its branches, and their ramifications, are nearly round, and form a series regularly decreasing from the trunk to the smallest fibre: uniformity is no where more remarkable than in the leaves, which, in the same species, have all the same colour, size, and shape: the seeds and fruits are all regular figures, approaching, for the most part, to the globular form. Hence a plant, especially of the larger kind, with its trunk, branches, foliage, and fruit, is a charming object.

In an animal, the trunk, which is much larger than the other parts, occupies a chief place: its shape, like that of the stem of plants, is nearly round; a figure which of all is the most agreeable: its two sides are precisely similar: several of the under parts go off in pairs; and the two individuals of each pair are accurately uniform: the single parts are placed in the middle: the limbs, bearing a certain proportion to the trunk, serve to support it, and to give it a proper elevation: upon one extremity are disposed the neck and head, in the direction of the trunk: the head being the chief part, possesses, with great propriety, the chief place. Hence, the beauty of the whole figure, is the result of many equal and proportional parts orderly dis-



posed ; and the smallest variation in number, equality, proportion, or order, never fails to produce a perception of deformity.

Nature in no particular seems more profuse of ornament, than in the beautiful colouring of her works. The flowers of plants, the furs of beasts, and the feathers of birds, vie with each other in the beauty of their colours, which in lustre as well as in harmony are beyond the power of imitation. Of all natural appearances, the colouring of the human face is the most exquisite : it is the strongest instance of the ineffable art of nature, in adapting and proportioning its colours to the magnitude, figure, and position, of the parts. In a word, colour seems to live in nature only, and to languish under the finest touches of art.

When we examine the internal structure of a plant or animal, a wonderful subtlety of mechanism is displayed. Man, in his mechanical operations, is confined to the surface of bodies ; but the operations of nature are exerted through the whole substance, so as to reach even the elementary parts. Thus the body of an animal, and of a plant, are composed of certain great vessels ; these of smaller ; and these again of still smaller, without end, as far as we can discover. This power of diffusing mechanism through the most intimate parts, is peculiar to nature, and distinguishes her operations, most remarkably, from every work of art. Such texture, continued from the grosser parts to the most minute, preserves all along the strictest regularity : the fibres of plants are a bundle of cylindric canals, lying in the same direction, and parallel, or nearly parallel to each other : in some instances, a most accurate arrangement of parts is discovered, as in onions, formed of concentric coats, one within another, to the very centre. An animal



body is still more admirable, in the disposition of its internal parts, and in their order and symmetry ; there is not a bone, a muscle, a blood-vessel, a nerve, that hath not one corresponding to it on the opposite side ; and the same order is carried through the most minute parts : the lungs are composed of two parts, which are disposed upon the sides of the thorax ; and the kidneys, in a lower situation, have a position no less orderly : as to the parts that are single, the heart is advantageously situated near the middle ; the liver, stomach, and spleen, are disposed in the upper region of the abdomen, about the same height : the bladder is placed in the middle of the body, as well as the intestinal canal, which fills the whole cavity with its convolutions.

The mechanical power of nature, not confined to small bodies, reacheth equally those of the greatest size ; witness the bodies that compose the solar system, which, however large, are weighed, measured and subjected to certain laws, with the utmost accuracy. Their places round the sun, with their distances, are determined by a precise rule, corresponding to their quantity of matter. The superior dignity of the central body, in respect to its bulk and lucid appearance, is suited to the place it occupies. The globular figure of these bodies, is not only in itself beautiful, but is above all others fitted for regular motion. Each planet revolves about its own axis in a given time ; and each moves round the sun, in an orbit nearly circular, and in a time proportioned to its distance. Their velocities, directed by an established law, are perpetually changing by regular accelerations and retardations. In fine, the great variety of regular appearances, joined with the beauty of the system itself, cannot fail to produce the heighest delight in every one who is sensible of design, power, or beauty.



Nature hath a wonderful power of connecting systems with each other, and of propagating that connexion through all her works. Thus the constituent parts of a plant, the roots, the stem, the branches, the leaves, the fruit are really different systems, united by a mutual dependence on each other: in an animal, the lymphatic and lacteal ducts, the blood-vessels and nerves, the muscles and glands, the bones and cartilages, the membranes and bowels, with the other organs, form distinct systems, which are united into one whole. There are at the same time, other connexions less intimate: every plant is joined to the earth by its roots; it requires rain and dews to furnish it with juices; and it requires heat to preserve these juices in fluidity and motion: every animal, by its gravity, is connected with the earth, with the element in which it breathes, and with the sun, by deriving from it cherishing and enlivening heat: the earth furnisheth aliment to plants, these to animals, and these again to other animals, in a long train of dependence: that the earth is part of a greater system comprehending many bodies mutually attracting each other, and gravitating all toward one common centre, is now thoroughly explored. Such a regular and uniform series of connexions, propagated through so great a number of beings, and through such wide spaces, is wonderful: and our wonder must increase, when we observe these connexions propagated from the minutest atoms to bodies of the most enormous size, and so widely diffused as that we can neither perceive their beginning nor their end. That these connexions are not confined within our own planetary system, is certain: they are diffused over spaces still more remote, where new bodies and systems rise without end. All space is filled with the works of God,



which are conducted by one plan, to answer unerringly one great end.

But the most wonderful connexion of all, though not the most conspicuous, is that of our internal frame, with the works of nature: man is obviously fitted for contemplating these works, because in this contemplation he has great delight. The works of nature are remarkable in their uniformity no less than in their variety; and the mind of man is fitted to receive pleasure equally from both. Uniformity and variety are interwoven in the works of nature with surprising art: variety, however great, is never without some degree of uniformity; nor the greatest uniformity without some degree of variety: there is great variety in the same plant, by the different appearances of its stem, branches, leaves, blossoms, fruit, size, and colour; and yet, when we trace that variety through different plants, especially of the same kind, there is discovered a surprising uniformity: again, where nature seems to have intended the most exact uniformity, as among individuals of the same kind, there still appears a diversity, which serves readily to distinguish one individual from another. It is indeed admirable, that the human visage, in which uniformity is so prevalent, should yet be so marked, as to leave no room, among millions, for mistaking one person for another: these marks, though clearly perceived, are generally so delicate, that words cannot be found to describe them. A correspondence so perfect between the human mind and the works of nature, is extremely remarkable. The opposition between variety and uniformity is so great that one would not readily imagine they could both be relished by the same palate; at least not in the same object, nor at the same time: it is however true, that the pleasures they afford, being



happily adjusted to each other, and readily mixing in intimate union, are frequently produced by the same individual object. Nay, further, in the objects that touch us the most, uniformity and variety are constantly combined; witness natural objects, where this combination is always found in perfection. Hence it is, that natural objects readily form themselves into groupes, and are agreeable in whatever manner combined: a wood with its trees, shrubs, and herbs, is agreeable: the music of birds, the lowing of cattle, and the murmuring of a brook, are in conjunction delightful; though they strike the ear without modulation or harmony. In short, nothing can be more happily accommodated to the inward constitution of man, than that mixture of uniformity with variety, which the eye discovers in natural objects; and, accordingly, the mind is never more highly gratified than in contemplating a natural landscape.



## CHAPTER X.

*Congruity and Propriety.*

MAN is superior to the brute, not more by his rational faculties, than by his senses. With respect to external senses, brutes probably yield not to men; and they may also have some obscure perception of beauty: but the more delicate senses of regularity, order, uniformity, and congruity, being connected with morality and religion, are reserved to dignify the chief of the terrestrial creation. Upon that account, no discipline is more suitable to man, nor more *congruous* to the dignity of his nature, than that which refines his taste, and leads him to distinguish, in every subject, what is regular, what is orderly, what is suitable, and what is fit and proper.\*

It is clear from the very conception of the terms *congruity* and *propriety*, that they are not applicable to any single object: they imply a plurality, and obviously signify a particular *relation* between different objects. Thus we say currently, that a decent garb is suitable or *proper* for a judge, modest behaviour for a young woman, and a lofty

\* Nec vero illa parva vis naturæ est rationisque, quod unum hoc animal sentit quid sit ordo, quid sit quod deceat in factis dictisque, qui modus. Itaque eorum ipsorum, quæ aspectu sentiuntur, nullum aliud animal, pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam partium sentit. Quam similitudinem natura ratioque ab oculis ad animum transferens, multo etiam magis pulchritudinem, constantiam, ordinem, in consillis factisque conservandum putat, cavetque ne quid indecore effeminateve faciat; tum in omnibus et opinionibus et factis ne quid libidinose aut faciat aut cogitet. Quibus ex rebus constat et efficitur id, quod quærimus, honestum. *Cicero de Officiis, l. i.*



style for an epic poem: and, on the other hand, that it is unsuitable or *incongruous* to see a little woman sunk in an overgrown farthingale, a coat richly embroidered covering coarse and dirty linen, a mean subject in an elevated style, an elevated subject in a mean style, a first minister darning his wife's stocking, or a reverend prelate in lawn sleeves dancing a hornpipe.

The perception we have of this relation, which seems peculiar to man, cannot proceed from any other cause, but from a *sense* of congruity or propriety; for, supposing us destitute of that sense, the terms would be to us unintelligible.\*

It is matter of experience, that congruity or propriety, wherever perceived, is agreeable; and that incongruity or impropriety, wherever perceived, is disagreeable. The only difficulty is, to ascertain what are the particular objects that in conjunction suggest these relations; for there are many objects that do not: the sea, for example, viewed in conjunction with a picture, or a man viewed in conjunction with a mountain, suggest not either congruity or incongruity. It seems natural to infer,

\* From many things that pass current in the world without being generally condemned, one at first view would imagine, that the sense of congruity or propriety hath scarce any foundation in nature, and that it is rather an artificial refinement of those who affect to distinguish themselves from others. The fulsome panegyrics bestowed upon the great and opulent, in epistles dedicatory and other such compositions, would incline us to think so. Did there prevail in the world, it will be said, or did nature suggest, a taste of what is suitable, decent or proper, would any good writer deal in such compositions, or any man of sense receive them without disgust? Can it be supposed that Lewis XIV. of France was endued by nature with any sense of propriety, when, in a dramatic performance purposely composed for his entertainment, he suffered himself, publicly and in his presence, to be styled the greatest king ever the earth produced? These, it is true, are strong facts; but luckily they do not prove the sense of propriety to be artificial: they only prove, that the sense of propriety is at times overpowered by pride and vanity; which is no singular case, for that sometimes is the fate even of the sense of justice.



what will be found true by induction, that we never perceive congruity nor incongruity but among things that are connected by some relation ; such as a man and his actions, a principle and its accessories, a subject and its ornaments. We are indeed so framed by nature, as, among things so connected, to require a certain suitableness or correspondence, termed *congruity* or *propriety* ; and to be displeased when we find the opposite relation of *incongruity* or *impropriety*.\*

If things connected be the subject of congruity, it is reasonable beforehand to expect a degree of congruity proportioned to the degree of the connexion. And, upon examination, we find our expectation to be well founded : where the relation is intimate, as between a cause and its effect, a whole and its parts, we require the strictest congruity ; but where the relation is slight, or accidental, as among things jumbled together, we require little or no congruity : the strictest propriety is required in behaviour and manner of living ; because a man is connected with these by the relation of cause and effect : the relation between an edifice and the ground it stands upon, is of the most intimate kind, and therefore the situation of a great house ought to be lofty : its relation to neigh-

\* In the chapter of beauty, qualities are distinguished into primary and secondary : and to clear some obscurity that may appear in the text, it is proper to be observed, that the same distinction is applicable to relations. Resemblance, equality, uniformity, proximity, are relations that depend not on us, but exist equally whether perceived or not ; and upon that account may justly be termed *primary* relations. But there are other relations, that only appear to us, and that have not any external existence like primary relations ; which is the case of congruity, incongruity, propriety, impropriety : these may be properly termed *secondary* relations. Thus it appears from what is said in the text, that the secondary relations mentioned arise from objects connected by some primary relation. Propriety is an example of a secondary relation, as it exists no where but in the mind. I purchase a field or a horse : the covenant makes the primary relation ; and the secondary relation built on it, is propriety.



bouring hills, rivers, plains, being that of the propinquity only, demands but a small share of congruity: among members of the same club, the congruity ought to be considerable, as well as among things placed for show in the same niche: among passengers in a stage-coach we require very little congruity; and less still at a public spectacle.

Congruity is so nearly allied to beauty, as commonly to be held a species of it; and yet they differ so essentially, as never to coincide: beauty, like colour, is placed upon a single subject; congruity upon a plurality: further, a thing beautiful in itself, may, with relation to other things, produce the strongest sense of incongruity.

Congruity and propriety are commonly reckoned synonymous terms; and hitherto in opening the subject they have been used indifferently: but they are distinguishable; and the precise meaning of each must be ascertained. Congruity is the genus, of which propriety is a species; for we call nothing *propriety*, but that congruity or suitableness, which ought to subsist between sensible beings and their thoughts, words, and actions.

In order to give a full view of these secondary relations, I shall trace them through some of the most considerable primary relations. The relation of a part to the whole, being extremely intimate, demands the utmost degree of congruity: even the slightest deviation is disgusting; witness the *Lautrin*, a burlesque poem, which is closed with a serious and warm panegyric on Lamoignon, one of the King's judges:

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Amphora cœpit  
Institui; currente rota, cur urceus exit?

Examples, of congruity and incongruity are furnished in plenty by the relation between a subject



and its ornaments. A literary performance, intended merely for amusement, is susceptible of much ornament, as well as a music room or a playhouse; for in gaiety the mind hath a peculiar relish for show and decoration. The most gorgeous apparel, however improper in tragedy, is not unsuitable to opera-actors: the truth is, an opera, in its present form, is a mighty fine thing; but, as it deviates from nature in its capital circumstances, we look not for nature nor propriety in those which are accessory. On the other hand, a serious and important subject admits not much ornament;\* nor a subject that of itself is extremely beautiful: and a subject that fills the mind with its loftiness and grandeur, appears best in a dress altogether plain.

To a person of a mean appearance, gorgeous apparel is unsuitable; which beside the incongruity, shows by contrast the meanness of appearance in the strongest light. Sweetness of look and manner requires simplicity of dress joined with the greatest elegance. A stately and majestic air requires sumptuous apparel, which ought not to be gaudy, nor crowded with little ornaments. A woman of consummate beauty can bear to be highly adorned, and yet shows best in a plain dress,

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For loveliness  
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,  
But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.

*Thompson's Autumn, 208.*

Congruity regulates not only the quantity of ornament, but also the kind. The decorations of a dancing-room ought all of them to be gay. No

\* Contrary to this rule, the introduction to the third volume of the *Characteristics*, is a continued chain of metaphors: these in such profusion are too florid for the subject; and have beside the bad effect of removing our attention from the principal subject, to fix it upon splendid trifles.



picture is proper for a church, but what has religion for its subject. Every ornament upon a shield should relate to war; and Virgil, with great judgment, confines the carvings upon the shield of Æneas to the military history of the Romans: that beauty is overlooked by Homer; for the bulk of the sculpture upon the shield of Achilles is of the arts of peace in general, and of joy and festivity in particular: the author of *Telemachus* betrays the same inattention, in describing the shield of that young hero.

In judging of propriety with regard to ornaments, we must attend, not only to the nature of the subject that is to be adorned, but also to the circumstances in which it is placed: the ornaments that are proper for a ball will appear not altogether so decent at public worship: and the same person ought to dress differently for a marriage-feast and for a funeral.

Nothing is more intimately related to a man than his sentiments, words, and actions; and therefore we require here the strictest conformity. When we find what we thus require, we have a lively sense of propriety: when we find the contrary, our sense of impropriety is no less lively. Hence the universal distaste of affectation, which consists in making a show of greater delicacy and refinement, than is suited either to the character or circumstances of the person. Nothing in epic or dramatic compositions is more disgusting than impropriety of manners. In *Corneille's* tragedy of *Cinna*, Æmilia, a favourite of Augustus, receives daily marks of his affection, and is loaded with benefits: yet all the while is laying plots to assassinate her benefactor, directed by no other motive than to avenge her father's death: \* revenge

\* See *Act I. Sc. 2.*



against a benefactor, founded solely upon filial piety, cannot be directed by any principle but that of justice, and therefore never can suggest unlawful means; yet the crime here attempted, a treacherous murder, is what even a miscreant will scarce attempt against his bitterest enemy.

What is said might be thought sufficient to explain the relations of congruity and propriety.— And yet the subject is not exhausted: on the contrary, the prospect enlarges upon us, when we take under view the effects these relations produce in the mind. Congruity and propriety, wherever perceived, appear agreeable; and every agreeable object produceth in the mind a pleasant emotion: incongruity and impropriety, on the other hand, are disagreeable; and of course produce painful emotions. These emotions, whether pleasant or painful, sometimes vanish without any consequence; but more frequently occasion other emotions, to which I proceed.

When any slight incongruity is perceived in an accidental combination of persons or things, as of passengers in a stage-coach, or of individuals dining at an ordinary; the painful emotion of incongruity, after a momentary existence, vanisheth without producing any effect. But this is not the case of propriety and impropriety: voluntary acts, whether words or deeds, are imputed to the author: when proper, we reward him with our esteem; when improper, we punish him with our contempt. Let us suppose, for example, a generous action suited to the character of the author, which raises in him and in every spectator the pleasant emotion of propriety: this emotion generates in the author both self-esteem and joy; the former when he considers his relation to the action, and the latter when he considers the good opinion that others will en-



tain of him: the same emotion of propriety produceth in the spectators esteem for the author of the action; and when they think of themselves, it also produceth by contrast an emotion of humility. To discover the effects of an unsuitable action, we must invert each of these circumstances: the painful emotion of impropriety generates in the author of the action both humility and shame; the former when he considers his relation to the action, and the latter when he considers what others will think of him; the same emotion of impropriety produceth in the spectators contempt for the author of the action; and it also produceth, by contrast when they think of themselves, an emotion of self-esteem. Here, then, are many different emotions, derived from the same action considered in different views by different persons; a machine provided with many springs, and not a little complicated. Propriety of action, it would seem, is a favourite of Nature, or of the Author of Nature, when such care and solicitude is bestowed on it. It is not left to our own choice; but, like justice, is required at our hands: and, like justice, is enforced by natural rewards and punishments; a man cannot, with impunity, do any thing unbecoming or improper; he suffers the chastisement of contempt inflicted by others, and of shame inflicted by himself. An apparatus so complicated, and so singular, ought to rouse our attention: for nature doth nothing in vain; and we may conclude with certainty, that this curious branch of the human constitution is intended for some valuable purpose. To the discovery of that purpose or final cause, I shall with ardour apply my thoughts, after discoursing a little more at large upon the punishment, as it may now be called, that Nature hath provided for indecent and unbecoming behaviour.



This, at any rate, is necessary, in order to give a full view of the subject; and who knows whether it may not, over and above, open some track that will lead us to the final cause we are in quest of?

A gross impropriety is punished with contempt and indignation, which are vented against the offender by external expressions; nor is even the slightest impropriety suffered to pass without some degree of contempt. But there are improprieties of the slighter kind, that provoke laughter; of which we have examples without end in the blunders and absurdities of our own species: such improprieties receive a different punishment, as will appear by what follows. The emotions of contempt and of laughter occasioned by an impropriety of that kind, uniting intimately in the mind of the spectator, are expressed externally by a peculiar sort of laugh, termed *a laugh of derision or scorn*.\* An impropriety that thus moves not only contempt but laughter, is distinguished by the epithet of *ridiculous*; and a laugh of derision or scorn is the punishment provided for it by nature. Nor ought it to escape observation, that we are so fond of inflicting that punishment, as sometimes to exert it even against creatures of an inferior species; witness a turkeycock swelling with pride, and strutting with displayed feathers, which in a gay mood is apt to provoke a laugh of derision.

We must not expect, that these different improprieties are separated by distinct boundaries; for of improprieties, from the slightest to the most gross, from the most risible to the most serious, there are degrees without end. Hence it is, that in viewing some unbecoming actions, too risible for anger, and too serious for derision; the specta-

\* See Chapter VII.



tor feels a sort of mixt emotion, partaking both of derision and of anger; which accounts for an expression, common with respect to the impropriety of some actions, That we know not whether to laugh or be angry.

It cannot fail to be observed, that in the case of a risible impropriety, which is always slight, the contempt we have for the offender is extremely faint, though derision, its gratification, is extremely pleasant. This disproportion between a passion and its gratification, may seem not conformable to the analogy of nature. In looking about for a solution, I reflect upon what is laid down above, that an improper action not only moves our contempt for the author, but also by means of contrast, swells the good opinion we have of ourselves. This contributes, more than any other particular, to the pleasure we have in ridiculing follies and absurdities; and accordingly, it is well known, that those who have the greatest share of vanity are the most prone to laugh at others. Vanity, which is a vivid passion, pleasant in itself, and not less so in its gratification, would singly be sufficient to account for the pleasure of ridicule, without borrowing any aid from contempt. Hence appears the reason of a noted observation, That we are the most disposed to ridicule the blunders and absurdities of others, when we are in high spirits; for in high spirits, self-conceit displays itself with more than ordinary vigour.

Having with wary steps traced an intricate road, not without danger of wandering; what remains to complete our journey, is, to account for the final cause of congruity and propriety, which make so great a figure in the human constitution. One final cause, regarding congruity, is pretty obvious, that the sense of congruity, as one principle of the fine



arts, contributes in a remarkable degree to our entertainment; which is the final cause assigned above for our sense of proportion,\* and need not be enlarged upon here. Congruity, indeed, with respect to quantity, coincides with proportion; when the parts of a building are nicely adjusted to each other, it may be said indifferently, that it is agreeable by the congruity of its parts, or by the proportion of its parts. But propriety, which regards voluntary agents only, can never be the same with proportion: a very long nose is disproportioned, but cannot be termed *improper*. In some instances, it is true, impropriety coincides with disproportion in the same subject, but never in the same respect. I give for an example a very little man buckled to a long toledo: considering the man and the sword with respect to size, we perceive a disproportion: considering the sword as the choice of the man, we perceive an impropriety.

The sense of impropriety with respect to mistakes, blunders, and absurdities, is evidently calculated for the good of mankind. In the spectators it is productive of mirth and laughter, excellent recreation in an interval from business. But this is a trifle compared to what follows. It is painful to be the subject of ridicule; and to punish with ridicule the man who is guilty of an absurdity, tends to put him more on his guard in time coming. It is well ordered, that even the most innocent blunder is not committed with impunity; because, were errors licensed where they do no hurt, inattention would grow into habit, and be the occasion of much hurt.

The final cause of propriety as to moral duties, is of all the most illustrious. To have a just notion

\* See Chapter III.



of it, the moral duties that respect others must be distinguished from those that respect ourselves. Fidelity, gratitude, and abstinence from injury, are examples of the first sort; temperance, modesty, firmness of mind, are examples of the other: the former are made duties by the sense of justice; the latter by the sense of propriety. Here is a final cause of the sense of propriety that will rouse our attention. It is undoubtedly the interest of every man to suit his behaviour to the dignity of his nature, and to the station allotted him by Providence; for such rational conduct contributes in every respect to happiness, by preserving health, by procuring plenty, by gaining the esteem of others, and, which of all is the greatest blessing, by gaining a justly founded self-esteem. But in a matter so essential to our well-being, even self-interest is not relied on: the powerful authority of duty is superadded to the motive of interest. The God of Nature, in all things essential to our happiness, hath observed one uniform method: to keep us steady in our conduct, he hath fortified us with natural laws and principles, preventive of many aberrations, which would daily happen were we totally surrendered to so fallible a guide as is human reason. Propriety cannot rightly be considered in another light than as the natural law that regulates our conduct with respect to ourselves; as justice is the natural law that regulates our conduct with respect to others. I call propriety a law, no less than justice; because both are equally rules of conduct that *ought* to be obeyed: propriety includes that obligation; for to say an action is proper, is in other words to say, that it *ought* to be performed; and to say it is improper, is in other words to say, that it *ought* to be forborne. It is that very character of *ought* and *should* which



makes justice a law to us ; and the same character is applicable to propriety, though perhaps more faintly than to justice : but the difference is in degree only, not in kind ; and we ought, without hesitation or reluctance, to submit equally to the government of both.

But I have more to urge upon that head. To the sense of propriety as well as of justice, are annexed the sanctions of rewards and punishments ; which evidently prove the one to be a law as well as the other. The satisfaction a man hath in doing his duty, joined to the esteem and goodwill of others, is the reward that belongs to both equally. The punishments also, though not the same, are nearly allied ; and differ in degree more than in quality. Disobedience to the law of justice is punished with remorse ; disobedience to the law of propriety, with shame, which is remorse in a lower degree. Every transgression of the law of justice raises indignation in the beholder ; and so doth every flagrant transgression of the law of propriety. Slighter improprieties receive a milder punishment : they are always rebuked with some degree of contempt, and frequently with derision. In general, it is true, that the rewards and punishments annexed to the sense of propriety are slighter in degree than those annexed to the sense of justice ; which is wisely ordered, because duty to others is still more essential to society than duty to ourselves : society, indeed, could not subsist a moment, were individuals not protected from the headstrong and turbulent passions of their neighbours.

The final cause now unfolded of the sense of propriety, must, to every discerning eye, appear delightful : and yet this is but a partial view ; for that sense reaches another illustrious end, which



is, in conjunction with the sense of justice, to enforce the performance of social duties. In fact, the sanctions visibly contrived to compel a man to be just to himself, are equally serviceable to compel him to be just to others; which will be evident from a single reflection, That an action, by being unjust, ceases not to be improper: an action never appears more eminently improper, than when it is unjust: it is obviously becoming, and suitable to human nature, that each man do his duty to others; and, accordingly, every transgression of duty to others, is at the same time a transgression of duty to one's self. This is a plain truth without exaggeration; and it opens a new and enchanting view in the moral landscape, the prospect being greatly enriched by the multiplication of agreeable objects. It appears now, that nothing is overlooked, nothing left undone, that can possibly contribute to the enforcing social duty; for to all the sanctions that belong to it singly, are superadded the sanctions of self-duty. A familiar example shall suffice for illustration. An act of ingratitude, considered in itself, is to the author disagreeable, as well as to every spectator; considered by the author with relation to himself, it raises self-contempt: considered by him with relation to the world, it makes him ashamed: considered by others, it raises their contempt and indignation against the author. These feelings are all of them occasioned by the impropriety of the action. When the action is considered as unjust, it occasions another set of feelings: in the author it produces remorse, and a dread of merited punishment; and in others, the benefactor chiefly, indignation and hatred directed to the ungrateful person. Thus shame and remorse united in the ungrateful person, and indignation united with hatred in the hearts of others, are the punish-



ments provided by nature for injustice. Stupid and insensible must he be, who, in a contrivance so exquisite, perceives not the benevolent hand of our creator.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### *Dignity and Grace.*

THE terms *dignity* and *meanness* are applied to man in point of character, sentiment, and behaviour: we say, for example, of one man, that he hath natural dignity in his air and manner; of another, that he makes a mean figure: we perceive dignity in every action and sentiment of some persons; meanness and vulgarity in the actions and sentiments of others. With respect to the fine arts, some performances are said to be manly, and suitable to the dignity of human nature; others are termed low, mean, trivial. Such expressions are common, though they have not always a precise meaning. With respect to the art of criticism, it must be a real acquisition to ascertain what these terms truly import; which possibly may enable us to rank every performance in the fine arts according to its dignity.

Inquiring first to what subjects the terms *dignity* and *meanness* are appropriated, we soon discover, that they are not applicable to any thing inanimate: the most magnificent palace that ever was built, may be lofty, may be grand, but it has no relation to



dignity : the most diminutive shrub may be little, but it is not mean. These terms must belong to sensitive beings, probably to man only ; which will be evident when we advance in the inquiry.

Human actions appear in many different lights : in themselves they appear grand or little ; with respect to the author, they appear proper or improper ; with respect to those affected by them, just or unjust : and I now add, that they are also distinguished by dignity and meanness. If any one incline to think, that, with respect to human actions, dignity coincides with grandeur, and meanness with littleness, the difference will be evident upon reflecting, that an action may be grand without being virtuous, and little without being faulty ; but that we never attribute dignity to any action but what is virtuous, nor meanness to any but what is faulty. Every action of dignity creates respect and esteem for the author ; and a mean action draws upon him contempt. A man is admired for a grand action, but frequently is neither loved nor esteemed for it : neither is a man always contemned for a low or little action. The action of Cæsar passing the Rubicon was grand ; but there was no dignity in it, considering that his purpose was to enslave his country : Cæsar, in a march, taking opportunity of a rivulet to quench his thirst, did a low action, but the action was not mean.

As it appears to me, dignity and meanness are founded on a natural principle not hitherto mentioned. Man is endowed with a SENSE of the worth and excellence of his nature : he deems it more perfect than that of the other beings around him ; and he perceives, that the perfection of his nature consists in virtue, particularly in virtues of the highest rank. To express that sense, the term *dignity* is appropriated. Further, to behave with



dignity and to refrain from all mean actions, is felt to be not a virtue only, but a duty : it is a duty every man owes to himself. By acting in that manner, he attracts love and esteem : by acting meanly, or below himself, he is disapproved and condemned.

According to the description here given of dignity and meanness, they appear to be a species of propriety and impropriety. Many actions may be proper or improper, to which dignity or meanness cannot be applied : to eat when one is hungry, is proper, but there is no dignity in that action : revenge fairly taken, if against law, is improper, but not mean. But every action of dignity is also proper, and every mean action is also improper.

This sense of the dignity of human nature, reaches even our pleasures and amusements : if they enlarge the mind by raising grand or elevated emotions, or if they humanize the mind by exercising our sympathy, they are approved as suited to the dignity of our nature : if they contract the mind by fixing it on trivial objects, they are condemned as not suited to the dignity of our nature. Hence, in general, every occupation, whether of use or amusement, that corresponds to the dignity of man, is termed *manly* ; and every occupation below his nature, is termed *childish*.

To those who study human nature, there is a point which has always appeared intricate : How comes it that generosity and courage are more esteemed, and bestow more dignity, than good nature, or even justice ; though the latter contribute more than the former to private as well as to public happiness ? This question, bluntly proposed, might puzzle a cunning philosopher ; but, by means of the foregoing observations, will easily be solved. Human virtues, like other objects, obtain a rank in



our estimation, not from their utility, which is a subject of reflection, but from the direct impression they make on us. Justice and good nature are a sort of negative virtues, that scarce make any impression but when they are transgressed: courage and generosity, on the contrary, producing elevated emotions, enliven greatly the sense of a man's dignity, both in himself and in others; and for that reason, courage, and generosity are in higher regard than the other virtues mentioned: we describe them as grand and elevated, as of greater dignity, and more praiseworthy.

This leads us to examine more directly emotions and passions with respect to the present subject; and it will not be difficult to form a scale of them, beginning with the meanest, and ascending gradually to those of the highest rank and dignity. Pleasure felt as the organ of sense, named *corporeal pleasure*, is perceived to be low: and, when indulged to excess, is perceived also to be mean: for that reason, persons of any delicacy dissemble the pleasure they take in eating and drinking. The pleasures of the eye and ear, having no organic feeling,\* and being free from any sense of meanness, are indulged without any shame: they even rise to a certain degree of dignity when their objects are grand or elevated. The same is the case of the sympathetic passions: a virtuous person behaving with fortitude and dignity under cruel misfortunes, makes a capital figure; and the sympathising spectator feels in himself the same dignity. Sympathetic distress at the same time never is mean: on the contrary, it is agreeable to the nature of a social being, and has general approbation. The rank that love possesses in the scale, depends



in a great measure on its object : it possesses a low place when founded on external properties merely ; and is mean when bestowed on a person of inferior rank without any extraordinary qualification : but when founded on the more elevated internal properties, it assumes a considerable degree of dignity. The same is the case of friendship. When gratitude is warm, it animates the mind ; but it scarce rises to dignity. Joy bestows dignity when it proceeds from an elevated cause.

If I can depend upon induction, dignity is not a property of any disagreeable passion : one is slight, another severe ; one depresses the mind, another animates it ; but there is no elevation, far less dignity, in any of them. Revenge in particular, though it inflame and swell the mind, is not accompanied with dignity, nor even with elevation : it is not, however, felt as mean or grovelling, unless when it takes indirect measures for gratification. Shame and remorse though they sink the spirits are not mean. Pride, a disagreeable passion, bestows no dignity in the eye of a spectator. Vanity always appears mean ; and extremely so where founded ; as commonly happens, on trivial qualifications.

I proceed to the pleasures of the understanding, which possess a high rank in point of dignity. Of this every one will be sensible, when he considers the important truths that have been laid open by science ; such as general theorems, and the general laws that govern the material and moral worlds. The pleasures of the understanding are suited to man as a rational and contemplative being ; and they tend not a little to ennoble his nature ; even to the Deity he stretcheth his contemplations, which, in the discovery of infinite power, wisdom, and benevolence, afford delight of the most exalted



kind. Hence it appears, that the fine arts, studied as a rational science, afford entertainment of great dignity; superior far to what they afford as a subject of taste merely.

But contemplation, however in itself valuable, is chiefly respected as subservient to action; for man is intended to be more an active than a contemplative being. He accordingly shows more dignity in action than in contemplation: generosity, magnanimity, heroism, raise his character to the highest pitch: these best express the dignity of his nature, and advance him nearer to divinity than any other of his attributes.

By every production that shows art and contrivance, our curiosity is excited upon two points; first, how it was made; and next, to what end. Of the two, the latter is the more important inquiry, because the means are ever subordinate to the end; and, in fact, our curiosity is always more inflamed by the *final* than by the *efficient* cause. This preference is no where more visible, than in contemplating the works of nature: if in the efficient cause, wisdom and power be displayed, wisdom is no less conspicuous in the final cause; and from it only can we infer benevolence, which of all the divine attributes is to man the most important.

Having endeavoured to assign the efficient cause of dignity and meanness, by unfolding the principle on which they are founded, we proceed to explain the final cause of the dignity or meanness bestowed upon the several particulars above mentioned, beginning with corporeal pleasures. These, as far as usual, are, like justice, fenced with sufficient sanctions to prevent their being neglected: hunger and thirst are painful sensations; and we are incited to animal love by a vigorous propensity: were corporeal pleasures dignified over and above



with a place in a high class, they would infallibly disturb the balance of the mind, by outweighing the social affections. This is a satisfactory final cause for refusing to these pleasures any degree of dignity : and the final cause is no less evident of their meanness, when they are indulged to excess. The more refined pleasures of external sense, conveyed by the eye and the ear from natural objects and from the fine arts, deserve a high place in our esteem, because of their singular and extensive utility : in some cases they rise to a considerable dignity ; and the very lowest pleasures of the kind are never esteemed mean or grovelling. The pleasure arising from wit, humour, ridicule, or from what is simply ludicrous, is useful, by relaxing the mind after the fatigue of more manly occupation ; but the mind, when it surrenders itself to pleasure of that kind, loses its vigour, and sinks gradually into sloth.\* The place this pleasure occupies in point of dignity, is adjusted to these views ; to make it useful as a relaxation, it is not branded with meanness ; to prevent its usurpation, it is removed from that place but a single degree : no man values himself for that pleasure, even during gratification ; and if it have engrossed more of his time than is requisite for relaxation, he looks back with some degree of shame.

In point of dignity, the social emotions rise above the selfish, and much above those of the eye and ear : man is by his nature a social being, and to qualify him for society, it is wisely contrived, that

\* Neque enim ita generati a natura sumus, ut ad ludum et jocum facti esse videamur, sed ad severitatem potius et ad quædam studia graviora atque majora. Ludo autem et joco, uti illis quidem licet, sed sicut somno et quietibus cæteris, tum cum gravibus seriisque rebus satisfecerimus.

*Cicero de offic. lib. i.*



he should value himself more for being social than selfish.\*

The excellency of man is chiefly discernable in the great improvements he is susceptible of in society: these, by perseverance, may be carried on progressively above any assignable limits; and, even abstracting from revelation, there is great probability, that the progress begun here will be completed in some future state. Now, as all valuable improvements proceed from the exercise of our rational faculties, the author of our nature, in order to excite us to a due use of these faculties, hath assigned a high rank to the pleasures of the understanding: their utility, with respect to this life as well as a future, entitles them to that rank.

But as action is the aim of all our improvements, virtuous actions justly possess the highest of all the ranks. These, we find, are by nature distributed into different classes, and the first in point of dignity assigned to actions that appear not the first in point of use: generosity, for example, in the sense of mankind is more respected than justice, though the latter is undoubtedly more essential to society; and magnanimity, heroism, undaunted courage, rise still higher in our esteem. One would readily think that the moral virtues should be esteemed according to their importance. Nature has here deviated from her ordinary path, and great wisdom is shown in the deviation: the efficient cause is explained above, and the final cause explained in the *Essays of Morality and Natural Religion*.†

\* For the same reason, the selfish emotions that are founded upon a social principle, rise higher in our esteem than those that are founded upon a selfish principle. As to which see above, p. 53. note.

† Part I, essay ii. Chapter 4.



We proceed to analyse *grace*, which being in a good measure an uncultivated field, requires more than ordinary labour.

*Graceful* is an attribute: *grace* and *gracefulness* express that attribute in the form of a noun.

That this attribute is agreeable, no one doubts.

As *grace* is displayed externally, it must be an object of one or other of our five senses. That it is an object of sight, every person of taste can bear witness; and that it is confined to that sense, appears from induction; for it is not an object of smell, nor of taste, nor of touch. Is it an object of hearing? Some music, indeed, is termed graceful; but that expression is metaphorical; as when we say of other music that it is beautiful: the latter metaphor, at the same time, is more sweet and easy; which shows how little applicable to music or to sound the former is, when taken in its proper sense.

That it is an attribute of man, is beyond dispute. But of what other beings is it also an attribute? we perceive at first sight that nothing inanimate is entitled to that epithet. What animal, then, beside man, is entitled? Surely, not an elephant, nor even a lion. A horse may have a delicate shape with a lofty mein, and all his motions may be exquisite; but he is never said to be graceful. Beauty and grandeur are common to man with some other beings; but dignity is not applied to any being inferior to man; and, upon the strictest examination, the same appears to hold in *grace*.

Confining then *grace* to man, the next inquiry is, whether, like, beauty, it makes a constant appearance, or in some circumstances only. Does a person display this attribute at rest as well as in motion, asleep as when awake? It is undoubtedly connected with motion; for when the most grace-



ful person is at rest, neither moving nor speaking, we lose sight of that quality as much as of colour in the dark. Grace then is an agreeable attribute, inseparable from motion as opposed to rest, and as comprehending speech, looks, gestures, and locomotion.

As some motions are homely, the opposite to graceful, the next inquiry is, with what motions is this attribute connected? No man appears graceful in a mask; and, therefore, laying aside the expressions of the countenance, the other motions may be genteel, may be elegant, but of themselves never are graceful. A motion adjusted in the most perfect manner to answer its end, is elegant; but still somewhat more is required to complete our idea of grace, or gracefulness.

What this unknown *more* may be, is the nice point. One thing is clear from what is said, that this *more* must arise from the expression of the countenance: and from what expressions so naturally as from those which indicate mental qualities, such as sweetness, benevolence, elevation, dignity? This promises to be a fair analysis; because of all objects mental qualities affect us the most; and the impression made by graceful appearance upon every spectator of taste, is too deep for any cause purely corporeal.

The next step is, to examine what are the mental qualities, that, in conjunction with elegance of motion, produce a graceful appearance. Sweetness, cheerfulness, affability, are not separately sufficient, nor even in conjunction. As it appears to me, dignity alone with elegant motion may produce a graceful appearance; but still more graceful with the aid of other qualities, those especially that are the most exalted.



But this is not all. The most exalted virtues may be the lot of a person whose countenance has little expression: such a person cannot be graceful. Therefore, to produce this appearance, we must add another circumstance, namely, an expressive countenance, displaying to every spectator of taste, with life and energy, every thing that passes in the mind.

Collecting these circumstances together, grace may be defined, that agreeable appearance which arises from elegance of motion, and from a countenance expressive of dignity. Expressions of other mental qualities are not essential to that appearance, but they heighten it greatly.

Of all external objects, a graceful person is the most agreeable.

Dancing affords great opportunity for displaying grace, and harranguing still more.

I conclude with the following reflection, That in vain will a person attempt to be graceful, who is deficient in amiable qualities. A man, it is true, may form an idea of qualities he is destitute of; and, by means of that idea, may endeavour to express those qualities by looks and gestures: but such studied expression will be too faint and obscure to be graceful.



## CHAPTER XII.

*Ridicule.*

TO define ridicule has puzzled and vexed every critic. The definition given by Aristotle is obscure and imperfect.\* Cicero handles it at great length;† but without giving any satisfaction: he wanders in the dark, and misses the distinction between risible and ridiculous. Quintilian is sensible of the distinction,‡ but has not attempted to explain it. Luckily this subject lies no longer in obscurity: a risible object produceth an emotion of laughter merely;§ a ridiculous object is improper as well as risible; and produceth a mixed emotion, which is vented by a laugh of derision or scorn.||

Having, therefore, happily unravelled the knotty part, I proceed to other particulars.

Burlesque, though a great engine of ridicule, is not confined to that subject; for it is clearly distinguishable into burlesque that excites laughter merely, and burlesque that provokes derision or ridicule. A grave subject in which there is no impropriety, may be brought down by a certain colouring so as to be risible; which is the case of *Virgil's Travestie*;¶ and also the case of the *Secchia Rapita*:\*\* the authors laugh first, in order to make their readers laugh. The *Lutrin* is a burlesque poem of the other sort, laying hold of a low and

\* Poet. cap. v.

† Ideoque anceps ejus rei ratio est, quod a derisu non procul abest risus; lib. VI. cap. iii. sect. 1.

‡ See Chapter VII.

¶ Scarren.

• † L. ii. De Oratore.

¶ See Chapter X.

\*\* Tassoni.



trifling incident, to expose the luxury, indolence, and contentious spirit of a set of monks. Boileau, the author, gives a ridiculous air to the subject, by dressing it in the heroic style, and affecting to consider it as of the utmost dignity and importance. In a composition of this kind, no image professedly ludicrous ought to find quarter, because such images destroy the contrast ; and, accordingly, the author shows always the grave face, and never once betrays a smile.

Though the burlesque that aims at ridicule, produces its effect by elevating the style far above the subject, yet it has limits beyond which the elevation ought not to be carried : the poet, consulting the imagination of his readers, ought to confine himself to such images as are lively, and readily apprehended : a strained elevation, soaring above an ordinary reach of fancy, makes not a pleasant impression : the reader, fatigued with being always upon the stretch, is soon disgusted ; and if he persevere, becomes thoughtless and indifferent. Further, a fiction gives no pleasure unless it be painted in colours so lively as to produce some perception of reality ; which never can be done effectually, where the images are formed with labour or difficulty. For these reasons, I cannot avoid condemning the *Batrachomyomachia*, said to be the composition of Homer : it is beyond the power of imagination to form a clear and lively image of frogs and mice, acting with the dignity of the highest of our species ; nor can we form a conception of the reality of such an action, in any manner so distinct as to interest our affections even in the slightest degree.

The *Rape of the Lock* is of a character clearly distinguishable from those now mentioned : it is



not properly a burlesque performance, but what may rather be termed *an heroi-comical poem* : it treats a gay and familiar subject with pleasantry, and with a moderate degree of dignity ; the author puts not on a mask like Boileau, nor professes to make us laugh like Tassoni. The *Rape of the Lock* is a genteel species of writing, less strained than those mentioned : and is pleasant or ludicrous without having ridicule for its chief aim ; giving way, however, to ridicule where it arises naturally from a particular character, such as that of Sir Plume. Addison's *Spectator* upon the exercise of the fan\* is extremely gay and ludicrous, resembling in its subject the *Rape of the Lock*.

Humour belongs to the present chapter, because it is connected with ridicule. Congreve defines humour to be "a singular and unavoidable manner of doing or saying any thing, peculiar and natural to one man only, by which his speech and actions are distinguished from those of other men." Were this definition just, a majestic and commanding air, which is a singular property, is humour ; as also a natural flow of correct and commanding eloquence, which is no less singular. Nothing just or proper is denominated humour ; nor any singularity of character, words, or actions, that is valued or respected. When we attend to the character of a humourist, we find that it arises from circumstances both risible and improper, and therefore that it lessens the man in our esteem, and makes him in some measure ridiculous.

Humour in writing is very different from humour in character. When an author insists upon ludicrous subjects with a professed purpose to make his readers laugh, he may be styled a *ludi-*



*crous writer*; but is scarce entitled to be styled a *writer of humour*. This quality belongs to an author, who, affecting to be grave and serious, paints his objects in such colours as to provoke mirth and laughter. A writer that is really an humourist in character, does this without design: if not, he must affect the character in order to succeed. Swift and Fontaine were humourists in character, and their writings are full of humour. Addison was not an humourist in character; and yet in his prose writings a most delicate and refined humour prevails. Arbuthnot exceeds them all in drollery and humorous painting; which shews a great genius, because, if I am not misinformed, he had nothing of that peculiarity in his character.

There remains to show by examples the manner of treating subjects, so as to give them a ridiculous appearance.

Il ne dit jamais, je vous donne, mais, je vous prete le bon jour.

*Moliere.*

*Orleans.* I know him to be valiant.

*Constable.* I was told that by one that knows him better than you.

*Orleans.* What's he?

*Constable.* Marry, he told me so himself; and he said he car'd not who knew it.

*Henry V. Shakspeare.*

He never broke any man's head but his own, and that was against a post when he was drunk.

*Ibid.*

*Millament.* Sententious Mirabell! Pr'ythee don't look with that violent and flexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child, in an old tapestry hanging.

*Way of the World.*

A true critic, in the perusal of a book, is like a dog at a feast, whose thoughts and stomach are wholly set upon what the



the guests fling away, and consequently is apt to snarl most when there are the fewest bones.

*Tale of a Tub.*

In the following instances, the ridicule arises from absurd conceptions in the persons introduced.

*Mascarille.* Te souvient-il, vicomte de cette demilune, que nous emportâmes sur les ennemis au siege d'Arras?

*Jodelet.* Que veux tu dire avec ta demi-lune? c'étoit bien une lune tout entiere.

*Moliere les Precieuses Ridicules, Sc. xi.*

*Slender.* I came yonder at Eaton to marry Mrs. Anne Page; and she's a great lubberly boy.

*Page.* Upon my life then you took the wrong.

*Slender.* What need you tell me that? I think so when I took a boy for a girl; if I had been marry'd to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

*Valentine.* Your blessing, Sir.

*Sir Sampson.* You've had it already, Sir; I think I sent it you to-day in a bill for four thousand pound; a great deal of money, Brother Foresight.

*Foresight.* Ay indeed, Sir Sampson, a great deal of money for a young man; I wonder what can he do with it.

*Love for Love, Act II. Sc. 7.*

*Millament.* I nauseate walking; 'tis a country-diversion; I lothe the country, and every thing that relates to it.

*Sir Wilful.* Indeed! hah! look ye, look ye, you do? nay, 'tis like you may—here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like; that must be confess'd indeed.

*Millament.* Ah l'etourdie! I hate the town too.

*Sir Wilful.* Dear heart, that's much—hah! that you should hate 'em both! hah! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country—'tis like you may be one of these, Cousine.

*Way of the World, Act IV. Sc. 4.*

*Lord Froth.* I assure you, Sir Paul, I laugh at nobody's jests but my own, or a lady's: I assure you, Sir Paul.

*Brisk.* How? how, my Lord? what affront may wit! Let me perish, do I never say any thing worthy to be laugh'd at?



*Lord Froth.* O foy, don't misapprehend me, I don't say so, for I often smile at your conceptions. But there is nothing more unbecoming a man of quality than to laugh; 'tis such a vulgar expression of the passion! every body can laugh. Then especially to laugh at the jest of an inferior person, or when any body else of the same quality does not laugh with one; ridiculous! To be pleas'd with what pleases the crowd! Now, when I laugh I always laugh alone.

*Double Dealer, Act I. Sc. 4.*

So sharp-sighted is pride in blemishes, and so willing to be gratified, that it takes up with the very slightest improprieties; such as a blunder by a foreigner in speaking our language, especially if the blunder can bear a sense that reflects on the speaker.

*Quickly.* The young man is an honest man.

*Caius.* What shall de honest man do in my closet? dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet.

*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

Love speeches are finely ridiculed in the following passage.

Quoth he, My faith as adamantine,  
As chains of destiny, I'll maintain;  
True as Apollo ever spoke,  
Or oracle from heart of oak:  
And if you'll give my flame but vent,  
Now in close hugger mugger pent,  
And shine upon me but benignly,  
With that one and that other pigsney,  
The sun and day shall sooner part,  
Than love, or you, shake off my heart;  
The sun that shall no more dispense  
His own but your bright influence:  
I'll carve your name on barks of trees,  
With true love-knots, and flourishes;  
That shall infuse eternal spring,  
And everlasting flourishing:



Drink ev'ry letter on't in stum,  
 And make it brisk champaign become.  
 Where-e'er you tread, your foot shall set  
 The primrose and the violet;  
 All spices, perfumes, and sweet powders,  
 Shall borrow from your breath their odours;  
 Nature her charter shall renew,  
 And take all lives of things from you;  
 The world depend upon your eye,  
 And when you frown upon it, die.  
 Only our loves shall still survive,  
 New worlds and natures to outlive;  
 And, like to herald's moons, remain  
 All crescents, without change or wane.

*Hudibras, Part II. canto i.*

Irony turns things into ridicule in a peculiar manner; it consists in laughing at a man under disguise of appearing to praise or speak well of him. Swift affords us many illustrious examples of that species of ridicule. Take the following.

By these methods, in a few weeks, there starts up many a writer, capable of managing the profoundest and most universal subjects. For what though his head be empty, provided his common-place book be full! And if you will bate him but the circumstances of method, and style, and grammar, and invention; allow him but the common privileges of transcribing from others, and digressing from himself, as often as he shall see occasion; he will desire no more ingredients towards fitting up a treatise that shall make a very comely figure on a bookseller's shelf, there to be preserved neat and clean, for a long eternity, adorned with the heraldry of its title, fairly inscribed on a label; never to be thumbred or greased by students, nor bound to everlasting chains of darkness in a library; but when the fulness of time is come, shall happily undergo the trial of purgatory, in order to ascend the sky.\*

I cannot but congratulate our age on this peculiar felicity, that though we have indeed made great progress in all other branches of luxury, we are not yet debauched with any *high relish* in poetry, but are in this one taste less nice than our ancestors,

\* Tale of a Tub, sect. vii.



If the Reverend clergy showed more concern than others, I charitably impute it to their great charge of souls; and what confirmed me in this opinion was, that the degrees of apprehension and terror could be distinguished to be greater or less, according to their ranks and degrees in the church.\*

A parody must be distinguished from every species of ridicule: it enlivens a gay subject by imitating some important incident that is serious: it is ludicrous, and may be risible; but ridicule is not a necessary ingredient. Take the following examples, the first of which refers to an expression of Moses.

The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:  
Let spades be trumps! she said, and trumps they were.

*Rape of the Lock, Canto iii. 45.*

The next is in imitation of Achilles's oath in Homer.

But by this lock, this sacred lock, I swear,  
(Which never more shall join its parted hair,  
Which never more its honours shall renew,  
Clip'd from the lovely head where late it grew,)  
That while my nostrils draw the vital air,  
This hand, which won it, shall forever wear.  
He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread  
The long-contended honours of her head.

*Ibid. Canto iv. 133.*

The following imitates the history of Agamemnon's sceptre in Homer.

\* A true and faithful narrative of what passed in London during the general consternation of all ranks and degrees of mankind.



Now meet thy fate, incens'd Belinda cry'd,  
 And drew a deadly bodkin from her side,  
 (The same, his ancient personage to deck,  
 Her great-great-grandsire wore about his neck,  
 In three seal-rings ; which after, melted down,  
 Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown :  
 Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,  
 The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew ;  
 Then in a bodkin grac'd her mother's hairs,  
 Which long she wore and now Belinda wears.)

*Ibid. Canto v. 87.*

Though ridicule, as observed above, is no necessary ingredient in a parody, yet there is no opposition between them : ridicule may be successfully employed in a parody : and a parody may be employed to promote ridicule ; witness the following example with respect to the latter, in which the goddess of Dulness is addressed upon the subject of modern education :

Thou gav'st that ripeness, which so soon began,  
 And ceas'd so soon, he ne'er was boy nor man ;  
 Through school and college, thy kind cloud o'ercast,  
 Safe and unseen the young Æneas past ;\*  
 Thence bursting glorious, all at once let down,  
 Stunn'd with his giddy larum half the town.

*Dunciad, b. iv. 287.*

The interposition of the gods, in the manner of Homer and Virgil, ought to be confined to ludicrous subjects, which are much enlivened by such interposition handled in the form of a parody ; witness the Cave of Spleen, *Rape of the Lock*, canto iv. ; the goddess of Discord, *Lutrin*, canto i. ; and the goddess of Indolence, *canto ii.*

Those who have a talent for ridicule, which is seldom united with a taste for delicate and refined

\* Æn. 1. i. *At Venus obscure, &c.*



beauties, are quick-sighted in improprieties; and these they eagerly grasp, in order to gratify their favourite propensity. Persons galled are provoked to maintain, that ridicule is improper for grave subjects. Subjects really grave are by no means fit for ridicule: but then it is urged against them, that when it is called in question whether a certain subject be really grave, ridicule is the only means of determining the controversy. Hence a celebrated question, Whether ridicule be or be not a test of truth? I give this question a place here, because it tends to illustrate the nature of Ridicule.

The question stated in accurate terms is, Whether the sense of ridicule be the proper test for distinguishing ridiculous objects, from what are not so. Taking it for granted, that ridicule is not a subject of reasoning, but of sense or taste,\* I proceed thus. No person doubts but that our sense of beauty is the true test of what is beautiful; and our sense of grandeur, of what is great or sublime. Is it more doubtful whether our sense of ridicule be the true test of what is ridiculous? It is not only the true test, but indeed the only test; for this subject comes not, more than beauty or grandeur, under the province of reason. If any subject by the influence of fashion or custom, have acquired a degree of veneration to which naturally it is not entitled, what are the proper means for wiping off the artificial colouring, and displaying the subject in its true light? A man of true taste sees the subject without disguise: but if he hesitate, let him apply the test of ridicule, which separates it from its artificial connexions, and exposes it naked with all its native improprieties.

\* See Chapter X. compared with Chapter VII.



But it is urged, that the gravest and most serious matters may be set in a ridiculous light. Hardly so; for where an object is neither risible nor improper, it lies not open in any quarter to an attack from ridicule. But supposing the fact, I foresee not any harmful consequence. By the same sort of reasoning, a talent for wit ought to be condemned, because it may be employed to burlesque a great or lofty subject. Such irregular use made of a talent for wit or ridicule, cannot long impose upon mankind: it cannot stand the test of correct and delicate taste; and truth will at last prevail even with the vulgar. To condemn a talent for ridicule because it may be perverted to wrong purposes, is not a little ridiculous: could one forbear to smile, if a talent for reasoning were condemned because it also may be perverted? and yet the conclusion in the latter case, would be not less just than in the former; perhaps more just; for no talent is more frequently perverted than that of reason.

We had best leave nature to her own operations: the most valuable talents may be abused, and so may that of ridicule: let us bring it under proper culture if we can, without endeavouring to pluck it up by the root. Were we destitute of this test of truth, I know not what might be the consequences: I see not what rule would be left us to prevent splendid trifles passing for matters of importance, show and form for substance, and superstition or enthusiasm for pure religion.



## CHAPTER XIII.

*Wit.*

WIT is a quality of certain thoughts and expressions: the term is never applied to an action nor a passion, and as little to an external object.

However difficult it may be, in many instances, to distinguish a witty thought or expression from one that is not so, yet, in general, it may be laid down that the term *wit* is appropriated to such thoughts and expressions as are ludicrous, and also occasion some degree of surprise by their singularity. Wit, also, in a figurative sense, expresses a talent for inventing ludicrous thoughts or expressions: we say commonly *a witty man*, or *a man of wit*.

Wit in its proper sense, as explained above, is distinguishable into two kinds; wit in the thought, and wit in the words or expression. Again, wit in the thought is of two kinds: ludicrous images, and ludicrous combinations of things that have little or no natural relation.

Ludicrous images that occasion surprise by their singularity, as having little or no foundation in nature, are fabricated by the imagination: and the imagination is well qualified for the office; being of all our faculties the most active, and the least under restraint. Take the following example:

*Shylock.* You knew (none so well, none so well as you) of my daughter's flight.

*Salino.* That's certain; I for my part knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

*Merchant of Venice, Act III. Sc. 1.*



The image here is undoubtedly witty. It is ludicrous : and it must occasion surprise : for having no natural foundation, it is altogether unexpected.

The other branch of wit in the thought, is that only which is taken notice of by Addison, following Locke, who defines it "to lie in the assemblage of ideas ; and putting those together, with quickness and variety, wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity, thereby to make up pleasant pictures and agreeable visions in the fancy."\* It may be defined more concisely, and perhaps more accurately, "A junction of things by distant and fanciful relations, which surprise because they are unexpected."† The following is a proper example.

We grant although he had much wit,  
He was very shy of using it,  
As being loth to wear it out ;  
And, therefore, bore it not about,  
Unless on holidays, or so,  
As men their best apparel do.

*Hudibras, Canto i.*

Wit is of all the most elegant recreation : the image enters the mind with gaiety, and gives a sudden flash, which is extremely pleasant. Wit thereby gently elevates without straining, raises mirth without dissoluteness, and relaxes while it entertains.

Wit in the expression, commonly called *a play of words*, being a bastard sort of wit, is reserved for the last place. I proceed to examples of wit in the thought ; and first of ludicrous images.

Falstaff, speaking of his taking Sir John Coleville of the Dale :

\* B. II. ch. xi. sect. 2.

† See Chapter I.



Here he is, and here I yield him ; and I beseech your Grace, let it be book'd with the rest of this day's deeds : or, by the Lord, I will have it in a particular ballad else, with mine own picture on the top of it, Coleville kissing my foot : to the which course if I be enforc'd, if you do not all show like gilt twopences to me ; and I, in the clear sky of fame, o'ershine you as much as the full moon doth the cinders of the element, which shew like pin's heads to her ; believe not the word of the Noble. Therefore let me have right, and let desert mount.

*Second Part Henry IV. Act IV. Sc. 6.*

I knew, when seven justices could not take up a quarrel, but when the parties were met themselves, one of them thought but of an *if* ; as, if you said so, then I said so ; and they shook hands, and swore brothers ; Your *if* is the only peacemaker ; much virtue is in *if*.

*Shakspeare.*

For there is not through all nature another so callous, and insensible a member, as the world's posteriors, whether you apply to it the toe or the birch.

*Preface to a Tale of a Tub.*

The war hath introduced abundance of polysyllables, which will never be able to live many more campaigns. Speculations, operations, preliminaries, ambassadors, palisadoes, communication, circumvallation, battalions, as numerous as they are, if they attack us too frequently in our coffee-houses, we shall certainly put them to flight, and cut off the rear.

*Tatler, No. 230.*

### Speaking of Discord.

She never went abroad, but she brought home such a bundle of monstrous lies, or would have amazed any mortal, but such as knew her ; of a whale that had swallowed a fleet of ships ; of the lions being let out of the Tower to destroy the Protestant Religion ; of the Pope's being seen in a brandy shop at Wapping, &c.

*History of John Bull, part 1. ch. xvi.*

The other branch of wit in the thought, namely, ludicrous combinations and oppositions, may be



traced through various ramifications. And, first, fanciful causes assigned that have no natural relation to the effects produced.

*Lancast.* Fare you well, Falstaff; I, in my condition, shall better speak of you than you deserve. [Exit.]

*Falstaff.* I would you had but the wit; 'twere better than your dukedom. Good faith, this same young sober-blooded boy doth not love me; nor a man cannot make him laugh; but that's no marvel, he drinks no wine. There's never any of these demure boys come to any proof; for thin drink doth so overcool their blood, and making many fish-meals, that they fall into a kind of male green-sickness; and then, when they marry, they get wenches. They are generally fools and cowards; which some of us should be too, but for inflammation. A good sherris-sack hath a two-fold operation in it: it ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish, dull, and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes; which delivered o'er to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The second property of your excellent sherris is, the warming of the blood; which before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale; which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice: but the sherris warms it, and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme; it illuminateth the face, which, as a beacon, gives warning to all the rest of this little kingdom, man, to arm; and then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain, the heart, who, great, and puff'd up with this retinue, doth any deed of courage: and thus valour comes of sherris. So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work; and learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil, till sack commences it, and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes it, that Prince Harry is valiant; for the cold blood he did naturally inherit of his father, he hath, like lean, sterile, and bare land, manured, husbanded, and till'd, with excellent endeavour of drinking good and good store of fertile sherris, that he is become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons, the first human principle I would teach them, should be to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack.

*Second Part of Henry IV. Act IV. Sc.*

The trenchant blade Toledo trusty,  
For want of fighting was grown rusty,



And ate into itself, for lack  
 Of some body to hue and hack.  
 The peaceful scabbard where it dwelt,  
 The rancor of its edge had felt ;  
 For of the lower end two handful,  
 It had devoured, 'twas so manful ;  
 And so much scorn'd to lurk in case,  
 As if it durst not shew its face.

*Hudibras, Canto I.*

### Speaking of Physicians,

Le bon de cette profession est, qu'il y a parmi les morts une honnêteté, une discrétion la plus grande du monde ; jamais on n'en voit se plaindre du médecin qui l'a tué.

*Le medecin malgré lui.*

Admirez les bontez, admirez les tendresses,  
 De ces vieux esclaves du sort.

Ils ne sont jamais las d'acquérir des richesses,  
 Pour ceux qui souhaitent leur mort.

*Belinda.* Lard, he has so pester'd me with flames and stuff  
 —I think I shan't endure the sight of a fire this twelve-month.

*Old Bachelor, Act II. Sc. 8.*

To account for effects by such fantastical causes, being highly ludicrous, is quite improper in any serious composition. Therefore the following passage from Cowley, in his poem on the death of Sir Henry Wooton, is in a bad taste.

He did the utmost bounds of knowledge find,  
 He found them not so large as was his mind.  
 But, like the brave Pellæan youth, did moan,  
 Because that Art had no more worlds than one.  
 And when he saw that he through all had past,  
 He dy'd, least he should idle grow at last.

### Fanciful reasoning.

*Falstaff.* Imbowell'd! —if thou imbowel me to-day, I'll give you leave to powder me, and eat me to-morrow! 'Blood,



'twas time to counterfeit, or that hot termagant Scot had paid me scot and lot too. Counterfeit! I lie, I am no counterfeit; to die is to be a counterfeit; for he is but the counterfeit of a man, who hath not the life of a man; but to counterfeit dying, when a man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed.

*First Part, Henry IV. Act I. Sc. 10.*

*Clown.* And the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian.

*Hamlet, Act V. Sc. 1.*

*Pedro.* Will you have me, Lady?

*Beatrice.* No, my Lord, unless I might have another for working days. Your Grace is too costly to wear every day.

*Much Ado about Nothing, Act II. Sc. 5.*

*Jessica.* I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

*Launcelot.* Truly the more to blame he; we were Christians enough before, e'en as many as could well live by one another: this making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not have a rasher on the coals for money.

*Merchant of Venice, Act III. Sc. 6.*

In western clime there is a town,  
To those that dwell therein well known;  
Therefore there needs no more be said here,  
We unto them refer our reader:  
For brevity is very good  
When we are, or are not understood.

*Hudibras, Canto i.*

But Hudibras gave him a twitch,  
As quick as lightning, in the breech,  
Just in the place where honour's lodg'd,  
As wise philosophers have judg'd;  
Because a kick in that part, more  
Hurts honour, than deep wounds before.

*Ibid. Canto iii.*



Ludicrous junction of small things with great, as of equal importance :

This day black omens threat the brightest fair  
That e'er deserv'd a watchful spirit's care :  
Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight ;  
But what, or where, the fates have wrapt in night :  
Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law :  
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw ;  
Or stain her honour, or her new brocade ;  
Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade ;  
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball ;  
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall.

*Rape of the Lock, Canto ii. 101.*

One speaks the glory of the British queen,  
And one describes a charming Indian screen.

*Ibid. Canto iii. 13.*

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,  
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.  
Not louder shrieks to pitying heav'n are cast,  
When husbands, or when lapdogs, breathe their last ;  
Or when rich china vessels fall'n from high,  
In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie !

*Ibid. Canto iii. 155.*

Not youthful kings in battle seiz'd alive,  
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,  
Not ardent lovers robb'd of all their bliss,  
Not ancient ladies when refus'd a kiss,  
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinn'd awry,  
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,  
As thou, sad virgin ! for thy ravish'd hair.

*Ibid. Canto iv. 3.*

Joining things that in appearance are opposite.  
As for example, where Sir Roger de Coverly, in the Spectator, speaking of his widow,

. That he would have given her a coal-pit to have kept her in clean linen ; and that her finger should have sparkled with one hundred of his richest acres.



Premises that promise much and perform nothing. Cicero upon that article says,

Sed scitis esse notissimum ridiculi genus, cum aliud expectamus, aliud dicitur: hic nobismetipsis noster error risum movet.\*

*Beatrice.*———With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if he could get her good-will.

*Much Ado about Nothing, Act II. Sc. 1.*

*Beatrice.* I have a good eye, uncle, I can see a church by daylight.

*Ibid.*

Le medecin que l'on m'indique  
Sait le Latin, le Grec, l'Hebreu,  
Les belles lettres, la physique,  
La chimie et la botanique.  
Chacun lui donne son aveu:  
Il auroit aussi ma pratique;  
Mais je veux vivre encore un peu.

Again,

Vingt fois le jour le bon Grégoire  
A soin de fermer son armoire.  
De quoi pensez vous qu'il a peur?  
Belle demande! Qu'un voleur  
Trouvant une facile proie,  
Ne lui ravisse tout son bien.  
Non; Grégoire a peur qu'on ne voie  
Que dans son armoire il n'a rien.

Again,

L'athsmatique Damon a cru que l'air des champs  
Repareroit en lui le ravage des ans,  
Il s'est fuit, a grands fraix, transporter en Bretagne.

\* De Oratore, 1. ii. cap. 63.



Or voyez ce qu'a fait l'air natal qu'il a pris !  
Damon seroit mort à Paris ;  
Damon est mort à la campagne.

Having discussed wit in the thought, we proceed to what is verbal only, commonly called a *play of words*. This sort of wit depends, for the most part, upon choosing a word that hath different significations : by that artifice hocus-pocus tricks are played in language, and thoughts plain and simple take on a very different appearance. Play is necessary for man, in order to refresh him after labour ; and, accordingly, man loves play, even so much as to relish a play of words ? and it is happy for us, that words can be employed, not only for useful purposes, but also for our amusement. This amusement, though humble and low, unbends the mind ; and is relished by some at all times, and by all at some times.

It is remarkable, that this low species of wit, has among all nations been a favourite entertainment, in a certain stage of their progress toward refinement of taste and manners, and has gradually gone into disrepute. As soon as a language is formed into a system, and the meaning of words is ascertained with tolerable accuracy, opportunity is afforded for expressions that, by the double meaning of some words, give a familiar thought the appearance of being new ; and the penetration of the reader or hearer is gratified in detecting the true sense disguised under the double meaning. That this sort of wit was in England deemed a reputable amusement, during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. is vouched by the works of Shakspeare, and even by the writings of grave divines. But it cannot have any long endurance : for as language ripens, and the meaning of words is more and



more ascertained, words held to be synonymous diminish daily; and when those that remain have been more than once employed, the pleasure vanisheth with the novelty.

I proceed to examples, which, as in the former case, shall be distributed into different classes.

A seeming resemblance from the double meaning of a word :

Beneath this stone my wife doth lie;  
She's new at rest, and so am I.

A seeming contrast from the same cause, termed a *verbal antithesis*, which hath no despicable effect in ludicrous subjects :

Whilst Iris his cosmetic wash would try  
To make her bloom revive, and lovers die,  
Some ask for charms, and others philters choose,  
To gain Corinna, and their quartans lose.

*Dispensary, Canto ii.*

And how frail nymphs, oft by abortion, aim  
To lose a substance, to preserve a name.

*Ibid. Canto iii.*

While nymphs take treats, or assignations give.

*Rape of the Lock.*

Other seeming connexions from the same cause :

Will you employ your conqu'ring sword,  
To break a fiddle, and your word?

*Hudibras, Canto ii.*

To whom the knight with comely grace  
Put off his hat to put his case.

*Ibid. part III. Canto iii.*

Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom  
Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;



Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,  
Does sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea.

*Rape of the Lock, Canto iii. l. 5.*

O'er their quietus where fat judges dose,  
And lull their cough and conscience to repose.

*Dispensary, Canto i.*

### Speaking of Prince Eugene :

This general is a great taker of snuff as well as of towns.

*Pope, Key to the Lock.*

Exul mentisque domusque.

*Metamorphosis, l. ix. 409.*

### A seeming opposition from the same cause :

Hic quiescit qui nunquam quievit.

Again,

Quel âge a cette Iris, dont on fait tant de bruit ?  
Me demandoit Cliton n'aguere.  
Il faut, dis-je, vous satisfaire,  
Elle a vingt ans le jour, et cinquante ans la nuit.

Again,

So like the chances are of love and war,  
That they alone in this distinguish'd are;  
In love the victors from the vanquish'd fly,  
They fly that wound, and they pursue that die.

*Waller.*

What new found witchcraft was in thee,  
With thine own cold to kindle me ?  
Strange art ; like him that should devise  
To make a burning-glass of ice.

*Cowley.*

Wit of this kind is unsuitable in a serious poem ;  
witness the following line in Pope's *Elegy* to the  
memory of an unfortunate lady :



Cold is that breast which warm'd the world before.

This sort of writing is finely burlesqued by Swift:

Her hands the softest ever felt,  
Though cold would burn, though dry would melt.

*Strephon and Chloe.*

Taking a word in a different sense from what is meant, comes under wit, because it occasions some slight degree of surprise :

*Beatrice.* I may sit in a corner, and cry *Heigh ho!* for a husband.

*Pedro.* Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

*Beatrice.* I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

*Much ado about Nothing, Act II. Sc. 5.*

*Falstaff.* My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

*Pistol.* Two yards and more.

*Falstaff.* No quips, now, Pistol : indeed I am in the waist two yards about ; but, I am now about no waste ; I am about thrift.

*Merry Wives of Windsor, Act I. Sc. 7.*

*Lord Sands.*——By your leave, sweet ladies,  
If I chance to talk a little wild, forgive me ;  
I had it from my father.

*Anne Bullen.* Was he mad, Sir!

*Sands.* O, very mad, exceeding mad, in love too ;  
But he would bite none——

*K. Henry VIII.*

An assertion that bears a double meaning, one right, one wrong, but so introduced as to direct us to the wrong meaning, is a species of bastard wit, which is distinguished from all others by the name *pun*. For example,



*Paris.*——Sweet Helen, I must woo you,  
To help unarm our Hector : his stubborn buckles,  
With these your white enchanting fingers touch'd,  
Shall more obey, than to the edge of steel,  
Or force of Greekish sinews ; you shall do more  
Than all the island Kings, disarm great Hector.

*Troilus and Cressida, Act III. Sc 2.*

The pun is in the close. The word *disarm* has a double meaning : it signifies to take off a man's armour, and also to subdue him in fight. We are directed to the latter sense by the context ; but, with regard to Helen, the word holds only true in the former sense. I go on with other examples :

Esse nihil dicis quicquid petis, improbe Cinna :  
Si nil, Cinna, petis, nil tibi, Cinna, nego.

*Martial, l. iii epigr. 61.*

Jocondus geminum imposuit tibi Sequana, pontem ;  
Hunc tu jure potes dicere pontificem.

*Zanazarius.*

*N. B. Jocondus was a monk.*

*Chief Justice.* Well ! the truth is, Sir John, you live in great infamy.

*Falstaff.* He that buckles him in my belt cannot live in less.

*Chief Justice.* Your means are very slender, and your waste is great.

*Falstaff.* I would it were otherwise : I would my means were greater and my waist slenderer.

*second Part, Henry IV. Act I. Sc. 1.*

*Celia.* I pray you bear with me, I can go no further.

*Clown.* For my part, I had rather bear with you than bear you : yet I should bear no cross if I did bear you ; for I think you have no money in your purse.

*As you Like it, Act II. Sc. 4.*

He that imposes an oath makes it,  
Not he that for convenience takes it ;  
Then how can any man be said  
To break an oath he never made ?

*Hudibras, Part II. Canto ii.*



The seventh satire of the first book of Horace is purposely contrived to introduce at the close a most execrable pun. Talking of some infamous wretch whose name was *Rex Rupilius*.

Persius exclamat, Per magnos, Brute, deos te  
Ora, qui reges consueris tollere, cur non  
Hunc regem jugulas? Operum hoc, mihi crede, tuorum est.

Though playing with words is a mark of a mind at ease, and disposed to any sort of amusement, we must not thence conclude that playing with words is always ludicrous. Words are so intimately connected with thought, that if the subject be really grave, it will not appear ludicrous even in that fantastic dress. I am, however, far from recommending it in any serious performance: on the contrary, the discordance between the thought and expression must be disagreeable; witness the following specimen.

He hath abandoned his physicians, Madam, under whose practices he hath persecuted time with hope: and finds no other advantage in the process, but only the losing of hope by time.

*All's well that ends well, Act I. Sc. 1.*

*K. Henry.* O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows!  
When that my care could not withhold thy riots,  
What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?

*Second Part, K. Henry IV.*

If any one shall observe, that there is a third species of wit, different from those mentioned, consisting in sounds merely, I am willing to give it place. And indeed it must be admitted, that many of Hudibras's double rhymes come under the definition of wit given in the beginning of this chapter: they are ludicrous, and their singularity occasions some degree of surprise. Swift is no less success-



ful than Butler in this sort of wit; witness the following instances: *Goddess—Hoddice. Phny—Nicolina. Iscariots—Chariots. Mitre—Nitre. Dragon—Suffragan.*

A repartee may happen to be witty: but it cannot be considered as a species of wit; because there are many repartees extremely smart, and yet extremely serious. I give the following example. A certain petulant Greek, objecting to Anacharsis that he was a Scythian: True, says Anacharsis, my country disgraces me, but you disgrace your country. This fine turn gives surprise; but it is far from being ludicrous.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### *Custom and Habit.*

VIEWING man as under the influence of novelty, would one suspect that custom also should influence him? and yet our nature is equally susceptible of each; not only in different objects, but frequently in the same. When an object is new, it is enchanting: familiarity renders it indifferent; and custom, after a longer familiarity, makes it again disagreeable. Human nature, diversified with many and various springs of action, is wonderfully, and, indulging the expression, intricately constructed.

Custom hath such influence upon many of our feelings, by warping and varying them, that we must attend to its operations if we would be acquainted with human nature. This subject, in



itself obscure, has been much neglected; and a complete analysis of it would be no easy task. I pretend only to touch it cursorily; hoping, however, that what is here laid down, will dispose diligent inquirers to attempt further discoveries.

*Custom* respects the action, *habit* the agent. By *custom* we mean a frequent reiteration of the same act; and by *habit*, the effect that custom has on the agent. This effect may be either active, witness the dexterity produced by custom in performing certain exercises; or passive, as when a thing makes an impression on us different from what it did originally. The latter only, as relative to the sensitive part of our nature, comes under the present undertaking.

This subject is intricate: some pleasures are fortified by custom; and yet custom begets familiarity, and consequently indifference:\* in many instances, satiety and disgust are the consequences of reiteration: again, though custom blunts the edge of distress and of pain, yet the want of any thing to which we have been long accustomed, is a sort of torture. A clue to guide us through all the intricacies of this labyrinth, would be an acceptable present.

Whatever be the cause, it is certain that we are much influenced by custom: it hath an effect upon our pleasures, upon our actions, and even upon our thoughts and sentiments. Habit makes no figure during the vivacity of youth: in middle age it gains ground; and in old age governs without controul. In that period of life, generally speaking,

\* If all the year were playing holidays,  
To sport would be as tedious as to work:  
But when they seldom come, they wish'd for come,  
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.

First Part, Henry IV. Act I. Sc. 3.



we eat at a certain hour, take exercise at a certain hour, go to rest at a certain hour, all by the direction of habit: nay, a particular seat, table, bed, comes to be essential; and a habit in any of these cannot be controlled without uneasiness.

Any slight or moderate pleasure frequently reiterated for a long time, forms a peculiar connexion between us and the thing that causes the pleasure. This connexion, termed *habit*, has the effect to awaken our desire or appetite for that thing when it returns not as usual. During the course of enjoyment, the pleasure rises insensibly higher and higher till a habit be established; at which time the pleasure is at its height. It continues not however stationary: the same customary reiteration which carried it to its height, brings it down again by insensible degrees, even lower than it was at first: but of that circumstance afterward. What at present we have in view, is to prove by experiments, that those things which at first are but moderately agreeable, are the aptest to become habitual. Spirituous liquors, at first scarce agreeable, readily produce an habitual appetite: and custom prevails so far, as even to make us fond of things originally disagreeable, such as coffee, assafoetida, and tobacco; which is pleasantly illustrated by Congreve:

*Fainall.* For a passionate lover, methinks you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

*Mirabell.* And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces, sifted her, and separated her failings; I study'd 'em, and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes, one day or other, to hate her heartily: to which end I sq



us'd myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less and less disturbance; till in a few days, it became habitual to me to remember 'em without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and in all probability, in a little time longer, I shall like 'em as well.

*The Way of the World, Act 1. Sc. 3.*

A walk upon the quarter-deck, though intolerably confined, becomes however so agreeable by custom, that a sailor in his walk on shore, confines himself commonly within the same bounds. I knew a man who had relinquished the sea for a country life: in the corner of his garden he reared an artificial mount with a level summit, resembling most accurately a quarter-deck, not only in shape but in size; and here he generally walked. In Minorca Governor Kane made an excellent road the whole length of the island; and yet the inhabitants adhere to the old road, though not only longer but extremely bad.\* Play or gaming, at first barely amusing by the occupation it affords, becomes in time extremely agreeable: and is frequently prosecuted with avidity, as if it were the chief business of life. The same observation is applicable to the pleasures of the internal senses, those of knowledge and virtue in particular: children have scarce any sense of these pleasures; and men very little who are in the state of nature without culture: our taste for virtue and knowledge improves slowly; but is capable of growing stronger than any other appetite in human nature.

\* Custom is second nature. Formerly, the merchants of Bristol had no place for meeting but the street, open to every variety of weather. An exchange was erected for them with convenient piazzas. But so riveted were they to their accustomed place, that in order to dislodge them, the magistrates were forced to break up the pavement, and to render the place a heap of rough stones.



To introduce an active habit, frequency of acts is not sufficient without length of time: the quickest succession of acts in a short time, is not sufficient; nor a slow succession in the longest time. The effect must be produced by a moderate soft action, and a long series of easy touches, removed from each other by short intervals. Nor are these sufficient without regularity in the time, place, and other circumstances of the action: the more uniform any operation is, the sooner it becomes habitual. And this holds equally in a passive habit; variety in any remarkable degree, prevents the effect: thus any particular food will scarce ever become habitual, where the manner of dressing is varied. The circumstances then requisite to augment a moderate pleasure, and at the long run to form a habit, are weak uniform acts, reiterated during a long course of time without any considerable interruption: every agreeable cause that operates in this manner, will grow habitual.

*Affection* and *aversion*, as distinguished from passion on the one hand, and on the other from original disposition, are in reality habits respecting particular objects, acquired in the manner above set forth. The pleasure of social intercourse with any person, must originally be faint, and frequently reiterated, in order to establish the habit of affection. Affection thus generated, whether it be friendship or love, seldom swells into any tumultuous or vigorous passion; but is, however, the strongest cement that can bind together two individuals of the human species. In like manner, a slight degree of disgust often reiterated with regularity, grows into the habit of aversion, which commonly subsists for life.

Objects of taste that are delicious, far from tending to become habitual, are apt, by indulgence, to



produce satiety and disgust: no man contracts a habit of sugar, honey, or sweetmeats, as he doth of tobacco:

*Dulcia non ferimus; succo renovamur amaro.*

*Ovid. art. amand. l. iii.*

Insidio è quel dolce, che condito  
Non è di qualche amor a, è tosto satia.

*Aminta di Tasso.*

These violent delights have violent ends,  
And in their triumph die. The sweetest honey  
Is loathsome in its own deliciousness,  
And in the taste confounds the appetite;  
Therefore love mod'rately, long love doth so;  
Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

*Romeo and Juliet, Act II. Sc. 6.*

The same observation holds with respect to all objects, that being extremely agreeable, raise violent passions: such passions are incompatible with a habit of any sort; and in particular they never produce affection nor aversion: a man who at first sight falls violently in love, has a strong desire of enjoyment, but no affection for the woman: \* a man

\* Violent love without affection is finely exemplified in the following story. When Constantinople was taken by the Turks, Irene, a young Greek of an illustrious family, fell into the hands of Mahomet II. who was at that time in the prime of youth and glory. His savage heart being subdued by her charms, he shut himself up with her, denying access even to his ministers. Love obtained such ascendancy, as to make him frequently abandon the army, and fly to his Irene. War relaxed, for victory was no longer the monarch's favourite passion. The soldiers, accustomed to booty, began to murmur; and the infection spread even among the commanders. The Basha Mustapha, consulting the fidelity he owed his master, was the first who durst acquaint him of the discourses held publicly to the prejudice of his glory.

The Sultan, after a gloomy silence, formed his resolution. He ordered Mustapha to assemble the troops next morning; and then with precipitation retired to Irene's apartment. Never before did that princess appear so charming; never before did the prince bestow so many warm caresses. To give a new lustre to her beauty, he exhorted her women next morning, to



who is surprised with an unexpected favour, burns for an opportunity to exert his gratitude, without having any affection for his benefactor: neither does desire of vengeance for an atrocious injury, involve aversion.

It is perhaps not easy to say why moderate pleasures gather strength by custom: but two causes concur to prevent that effect in the more intense pleasures. These, by an original law in our nature, increase quickly to their full growth, and decay with no less precipitation;\* and custom is too slow in its operation to overcome that law. The other cause is no less powerful: exquisite pleasure is extremely fatiguing; occasioning, as a naturalist would say, great expense of animal spirits;† and of such the mind cannot bear so frequent gratification, as to superinduce a habit: if the thing that raises the pleasure return before the mind have recovered its tone and relish, disgust ensues instead of pleasure.

A habit never fails to admonish us of the wonted time of gratification, by raising a pain for want of the object, and a desire to have it. The pain of

bestow their utmost art and care on her dress. He took her by the hand, led her into the middle of the army, and pulling off her veil, demanded of the Bashas with a fierce look, whether they ever had beheld such a beauty? After an awful pause, Mahomet, with one hand laying hold of the young Greek by her beautiful locks, and with the other pulling out his scimitar, severed the head from the body at one stroke. Then turning to his grandees, with eyes wild and furious, "This sword," said he, "when it is my will, knows to cut the bands of love." However strange it may appear, we learn from experience, that desire of enjoyment, may consist with the most brutal aversion, directed both to the same woman. Of this we have a noted example in the first book of Sully's Memoirs; to which I choose to refer the reader; for it is too gross to be transcribed.

\* See Chapter II. Part iii.

† Lady Easy, upon her husband's reformation, expresses to her friend the following sentiment: "Be satisfied; Sir Charles has made me happy, even to a pain of joy."



want is always first felt; the desire naturally follows: and upon presenting the object, both vanish instantaneously. Thus a man accustomed to tobacco, feels, at the end of the usual interval, a confused pain of want; which at first points at nothing in particular, though it soon settles upon its accustomed object: and the same may be observed in persons addicted to drinking, who are often in an uneasy restless state before they think of the bottle. In pleasures indulged regularly, and at equal intervals, the appetite, remarkably obsequious to custom, returns regularly with the usual time of gratification; not sooner, even though the object be presented. This pain of want arising from habit, seems directly opposite to that of satiety; and it must appear singular, that frequency of gratification should produce effects so opposite, as are the pains of excess and of want.

The appetites that respect the preservation and propagation of our species, are attended with a pain of want similar to that occasioned by habit: hunger and thirst are uneasy sensations of want, which always precede the desire of eating or drinking; and a pain for want of carnal enjoyment precedes the desire of an object. The pain being thus felt, independent of an object, cannot be cured but by gratification. Very different is an ordinary passion, in which desire precedes the pain of want: such a passion cannot exist but while the object is in view; and therefore, by removing the object out of thought, it vanisheth, with its desire, and pain of want.\*

The natural appetites above mentioned differ from habit in the following particular: they have an undetermined direction toward all objects of

\* See Chapter II. Part III.



gratification in general; whereas an habitual appetite is directed to a particular object: the attachment we have by habit to a particular woman, differs widely from the natural passion which comprehends the whole sex; and the habitual relish for a particular dish is far from being the same with a vague appetite for food. That difference notwithstanding, it is still remarkable, that nature hath enforced the gratification of certain natural appetites essential to the species, by a pain of the same sort with that which habit produceth.

The pain of habit is less under our power than any other pain that arises from want of gratification; hunger and thirst are more easily endured, especially at first, than an unusual intermission of any habitual pleasure: persons are often heard declaring they would forego sleep or food, rather than tobacco. We must not, however, conclude, that the gratification of an habitual appetite affords the same delight with the gratification of one that is natural: far from it; the pain of want only is greater.

The slow and reiterated acts that produce a habit, strengthen the mind to enjoy the habitual pleasure in greater quantity and more frequency than originally; and by that means a habit of intemperate gratification is often formed; after unbounded acts of intemperance, the habitual relish is soon restored, and the pain for want of enjoyment returns with fresh vigour.

The causes of the present emotions hitherto in view, are either an individual, such as a companion, a certain dwelling place, a certain amusement; or a particular species, such as coffee, mutton, or any other food. But habit is not confined to such. A constant train of trifling diversions, may form such a habit in the mind, that it cannot



be easy a moment without amusement : a variety in the objects prevents a habit as to any one in particular ; but as the train is uniform with respect to amusement, the habit is formed accordingly ; and that sort of habit may be denominated a *generic habit*, in opposition to the former, which is a *specific habit*. A habit of a town-life, of country sports, of solitude, of reading, or of business, where sufficiently varied, are instances of generic habits. Every specific habit hath a mixture of the generic ; for the habit of any one sort of food makes the taste agreeable, and we are fond of that taste wherever found. Thus a man, deprived of an habitual object, takes up with what most resembles it ; deprived of tobacco, any bitter herb will do, rather than want : a habit of punch, makes wine a good resource : accustomed to the sweet society and comforts of matrimony, the man, unhappily deprived of his beloved object, inclines the sooner to a second. In general, when we are deprived of a habitual object, we are fond of its qualities in any other object.

The reasons are assigned above, why the causes of intense pleasure become not readily habitual : but now we discover that these reasons conclude only against specific habits. In the case of a weak pleasure, a habit is formed by frequency and uniformity of reiteration, which, in the case of an intense pleasure, produceth satiety and disgust. But it is remarkable, that satiety and disgust have no effect, except as to that thing singly which occasions them : a surfeit of honey produceth not a loathing of sugar ; and intemperance with one woman produceth no disrelish of the same pleasure with others. Hence it is easy to account for a generic habit in any intense pleasure : the delight we had in the gratification of the appetite inflames



the imagination, and makes us, with avidity, search for the same gratification in whatever other subject it can be found. And thus uniform frequency in gratifying the same passion upon different objects, produceth at length a generic habit. In this manner, one acquires an habitual delight in high and poignant sauces, rich dress, fine equipages, crowds of company, and in whatever is commonly termed *pleasure*. There concurs, at the same time, to introduce this habit, a peculiarity observed above, that reiteration of acts enlarges the capacity of the mind, to admit a more plentiful gratification than originally, with regard to frequency as well as quantity.

Hence it appears, that though a specific habit cannot be formed but upon a moderate pleasure, a generic habit may be formed upon any sort of pleasure, moderate or immoderate, that hath variety of objects. The only difference is, that a weak pleasure runs naturally into a specific habit; whereas an intense pleasure is altogether averse to such a habit. In a word, it is only in singular cases that a moderate pleasure produces a generic habit; but an intense pleasure cannot produce any other habit.

The appetites that respect the preservation and propagation of the species, are formed into habit in a peculiar manner: the time as well as measure of their gratification are much under the power of custom, which, by introducing a change upon the body, occasions a proportional change in the appetites. Thus, if the body be gradually formed to a certain quantity of food at stated times, the appetite is regulated accordingly; and the appetite is again changed, when a different habit of body is introduced by a different practice. Here it would seem, that the change is not made upon the



mind, which is commonly the case in passive habits, but upon the body.

When rich food is brought down by ingredients of a plainer taste, the composition is susceptible of a specific habit. Thus the sweet taste of sugar, rendered less poignant in a mixture, may, in course of time, produce a specific habit for such mixture. As moderate pleasures, by becoming more intense, tend to generic habits; so intense pleasures, by becoming more moderate, tend to specific habits.

The beauty of the human figure, by a special recommendation of nature appears to us supreme, amid the great variety of beauteous forms bestowed upon animals. The various degrees in which individuals enjoy that property, render it an object, sometimes of a moderate, sometimes of an intense passion. The moderate passion admitting frequent reiteration without diminution, and occupying the mind without exhausting it, turns gradually stronger till it becomes a habit. Nay, instances are not wanting, of a face, at first disagreeable, afterward rendered indifferent by familiarity, and at length agreeable by custom. On the other hand, consummate beauty, at the very first glance, fills the mind so as to admit no increase. Enjoyment lessens the pleasure;\* and if often repeated, ends commonly in satiety and disgust. The impressions made by consummate beauty, in a gradual succession from lively to faint, constitute a series opposite to that of faint impressions waxing gradually more lively, till they produce a specific habit. But the mind, when accustomed to beauty, contracts a relish for it in general, though often repelled from particular objects by the pain of satiety: and thus a generic habit is formed, of which

\* See Chapter II. part iii.



inconstancy in love is the necessary consequence ; for a generic habit, comprehending every beautiful object, is an invincible obstruction to a specific habit, which is confined to one.

But a matter which is of great importance to the youth of both sexes, deserves more than a cursory view. Though the pleasant emotion of beauty differs widely from the corporeal appetite, yet when both are directed to the same object, they produce a very strong complex passion : enjoyment in that case must be exquisite ; and therefore more apt to produce satiety, than in any other case whatever. This is a never-failing effect, where consummate beauty in the one party, meets with a warm imagination and great sensibility in the other. What I am here explaining, is true without exaggeration ; and they must be insensible upon whom it makes no impression : it deserves well to be pondered by the young and the amorous, who, in forming the matrimonial society, are too often blindly impelled by the animal pleasure merely, inflamed by beauty. It may indeed happen, after the pleasure is gone, and go it must with a swift pace, that a new connexion is formed upon more dignified and more lasting principles : but this is a dangerous experiment : for even supposing good sense, good temper, and internal merit of every sort, yet a new connexion upon such qualifications is rarely formed : it commonly, or rather always happens, that such qualifications, the only solid foundation of an indissoluble connexion, are rendered altogether invisible by satiety of enjoyment creating disgust.

One effect of custom, different from any that have been explained, must not be omitted, because

\* See Chapter II. Part iv.



it makes a great figure in human nature : Though custom augments moderate pleasures, and lessens those that are intense, it has a different effect with respect to pain : for it blunts the edge of every sort of pain and distress, faint or acute. Uninterrupted misery, therefore, is attended with one good effect : if its torments be incessant, custom hardens us to bear them.

The changes made in forming habits, are curious. Moderate pleasures are augmented gradually by reiteration, till they become habitual ; and then are at their height : but they are not long stationary ; for from that point they gradually decay, till they vanish altogether. The pain occasioned by want of gratification, runs a different course ; it increases uniformly ; and at last becomes extreme, when the pleasure of gratification is reduced to nothing ;

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It so falls out,  
That what we have we prize not to the worth,  
While we enjoy it ; but being lack'd and lost,  
Why then we rack the value ; then we find  
The virtue that possession would not show us  
Whilst it was ours.

*Much ado about Nothing, Act IV. Sc. 2.*

The effect of custom with relation to specific habit, is displayed through all its varieties in the use of Tobacco. The taste of that plant is at first extremely unpleasant ; our disgust lessens gradually till it vanish altogether ; at which period the taste is neither agreeable nor disagreeable : continuing the use of the plant, we begin to relish it ; and our relish improves by use, till it arrive at perfection : from that period it gradually decays while the habit is in a state of increment, and consequently the pain of want. The result is, that when the habit has acquired its greatest vigour, the relish is gone ;



and accordingly we often smoke and take snuff habitually, without so much as being conscious of the operation. We must except gratification after the pain of want; the pleasure of which gratification is the greatest when the habit is the most vigorous; it is of the same kind with the pleasure one feels upon being delivered from the rack, the cause of which is explained above.\* This pleasure, however, is but occasionally the effect of habit; and however exquisite, is avoided as much as possible because of the pain that precedes it.

With regard to the pain of want, I can discover no difference between a generic and a specific habit. But these habits differ widely with respect to the positive pleasure: I have had occasion to observe, that the pleasure of a specific habit decays gradually till it turn imperceptible; the pleasure of a generic habit, on the contrary, being supported by variety of gratification, suffers little or no decay after it comes to its height. However it may be with other generic habits, the observation, I am certain, holds with respect to the pleasures of virtue and of knowledge: the pleasure of doing good has an unbounded scope, and may be so variously gratified, that it can never decay; science is equally unbounded; our appetite for knowledge having an ample range of gratification, where discoveries are recommended by novelty, by variety, by utility, or by all of them.

In this intricate inquiry, I have endeavoured, but without success, to discover by what particular means it is that custom hath influence upon us: and now nothing seems left, but to hold our nature to be so framed, as to be susceptible of such influence. And supposing it purposely so framed, it

\* Chapter II. Part i. Sect. 3.



will not be difficult to find out several important final causes. That the power of custom is a happy contrivance for our good, cannot have escaped any one who reflects, that business is our province, and pleasure our relaxation only. Now satiety is necessary to check exquisite pleasure, which otherwise would engross the mind, and unqualify us for business. On the other hand, as business is sometimes painful, and is never pleasant beyond moderation, the habitual increase of moderate pleasure and the conversion of pain into pleasure, are admirably contrived for disappointing the malice of Fortune, and for reconciling us to whatever course of life may be our lot :

How use doth breed a habit in a man !  
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,  
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.  
Here I can sit alone, unseen of any,  
And to the nightingale's complaining notes  
Tune my distresses, and record my woes.

*Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act V. Sc. 4.*

As the foregoing distinction between intense and moderate holds in pleasure only, every degree of pain being softened by time, custom is a catholicon for pain and distress of every sort ; and of that regulation the final cause requires no illustration.

Another final cause of custom will be highly relished by every person of humanity, and yet has in a great measure been overlooked ; which is, that custom hath a greater influence than any other known cause, to put the rich and the poor upon a level : weak pleasures, the share of the latter, become fortunately stronger by custom ; while voluptuous pleasures, the share of the former, are continually losing ground by satiety. Men of fortune, who possess palaces, sumptuous gardens, rich fields, enjoy them less than passengers do. The



goods of Fortune are not unequally distributed: the opulent possess what others enjoy.

And indeed, if it be the effect of habit to produce the pain of want in a high degree, while there is little pleasure in enjoyment; a voluptuous life is of all the least to be envied. Those who are habituated to high feeling, easy vehicles, rich furniture, a crowd of valets, much deference and flattery, enjoy but a small share of happiness, while they are exposed to manifold distresses. To such a man, enslaved by ease and luxury, even the petty inconvenience in travelling, of a rough road, bad weather, or homely fare, are serious evils: he loses his tone of mind, turns peevish, and would wreak his resentment even upon the common accidents of life. Better far to use the goods of Fortune with moderation: a man who by temperance and activity hath acquired a hardy constitution, is, on the one hand, guarded against external accidents; and, on the other, is provided with great variety of enjoyment ever at command.

I shall close this chapter with an article more delicate than abstruse, namely, what authority custom ought to have over our taste in the fine arts. One particular is certain, that we cheerfully abandon to the authority of custom, things that nature, hath left indifferent. It is custom, not nature, that hath established a difference between the right hand and the left, so as to make it awkward and disagreeable to use the left, where the right is commonly used. The various colours, though they affect us differently, are all of them agreeable in their purity: but custom has regulated that matter in another manner; a black skin upon a human being, is to us disagreeable; and a white skin probably no less so to a Negro. Thus things, originally indifferent, become agreeable or disagreeable,



by the force of custom. Nor will this be surprising after the discovery made above, that the original agreeableness or disagreeableness of an object, is, by the influence of custom, often converted into the opposite quality.

Proceeding to matters of taste, where there is naturally a preference of one thing before another; it is certain, in the first place, that our faint and more delicate feelings are readily susceptible of a bias from custom; and therefore that it is no proof of a defective taste to find these in some measure influenced by custom: dress and the modes of external behaviour are regulated by custom in every country: the deep red or vermilion with which the ladies in France cover their cheeks, appears to them beautiful in spite of nature; and strangers cannot altogether be justified in condemning that practice, considering the lawful authority of custom, or of the *fashion*, as it is called: It is told of the people who inhabit the skirts of the Alps facing the north, that the swelling they have universally in the neck is to them agreeable. So far has custom power to change the nature of things, and to make an object originally disagreeable take on an opposite appearance.

But, as to every particular that can be denominated proper or improper, right or wrong, custom has little authority, and ought to have none. The principle of duty takes naturally place of every other; and it argues a shameful weakness or degeneracy of mind, to find it in any case so far subdued as to submit to custom.

These few hints may enable us to judge in some measure of foreign manners, whether exhibited by foreign writers or our own. A comparison between the ancients and the moderns was some time ago a favourite subject: those who declared for ancient



manners thought it sufficient that these manners were supported by custom : their antagonists, on the other hand, refusing submission to custom as a standard of taste, condemned ancient manners as in several instances irrational. In that controversy, an appeal being made to different principles, without the slightest attempt to establish a common standard, the dispute could have no end. The hints above given tend to establish a standard for judging how far the authority of custom ought to be held lawful ; and, for the sake of illustration, we shall apply that standard in a few instances.

Human sacrifices, the most dismal effect of blind and groveling superstition, wore gradually out of use by the prevalence of reason and humanity. In the days of Sophocles and Euripides, traces of that practice were still recent ; and the Athenians, through the prevalence of custom, could without disgust suffer human sacrifices to be represented in their theatre, of which the *Iphigenia* of Euripides is a proof. But a human sacrifice, being altogether inconsistent with modern manners as producing horror instead of pity, cannot with any propriety be introduced upon a modern stage. I must therefore condemn the *Iphigenia* of Racine, which, instead of the tender and sympathetic passions, substitutes disgust and horror. Another objection occurs against every fable that deviates so remarkably from improved notions and sentiments ; which is, that if it should even command our belief by the authority of history, it appears too fictitious and unnatural to produce a perception of reality :\* a human sacrifice is so unnatural, and to us so improbable, that few will be affected with the representation of it more than with a fairy tale. The



objection first mentioned strikes also against the *Phedra* of that author: the Queen's passion for her step-son, transgressing the bounds of nature, creates aversion and horror rather than compassion. The author in his preface observes, that the Queen's passion, however unnatural, was the effect of destiny and the wrath of the gods; and he puts the same excuse in her own mouth. But what is the wrath of a heathen god to us Christians? we acknowledge no destiny in passion; and if love be unnatural, it never can be relished. A supposition like what our author lays hold of, may possibly cover slight improprieties; but it will never engage our sympathy for what appears to us frantic or extravagant.

Neither can I relish the catastrophe of that tragedy. A man of taste may peruse, without disgust, a Grecian performance describing a sea-monster sent by Neptune to destroy Hippolytus: he considers, that such a story might agree with the religious creed of Greece, and may be pleased with the story, as what probably had a strong effect upon a Grecian audience. But he cannot have the same indulgence for such a representation upon a modern stage; because no story that carries a violent air of fiction can ever move us in any considerable degree.

In the *Coephores* of Eschylus,\* Orestes is made to say, that he was commanded by Apollo to avenge his father's murder; and yet if he obeyed, that he was to be delivered to the furies, or be struck with some horrid malady: the tragedy accordingly concludes with a chorus, deploring the fate of Orestes, obliged to take vengeance against a mother, and involved thereby in a crime against his will. It is



impossible for any modern to bend his mind to opinions so irrational and absurd, which must disgust him in perusing even a Grecian story. Again, among the Greeks, grossly superstitious, it was a common opinion, that the report of a man's death was a presage of his death; and Orestes, in the first act of *Electra*, spreading a report of his own death, in order to blind his mother and her adulterer, is even in that case affected with the presage. Such imbecility can never find grace with a modern audience: it may indeed produce some compassion for a people afflicted with absurd terrors, similar to what is felt in perusing a description of the Hottentots; but such manners will not interest our affections, nor attach us to the personages represented.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### *External Signs of Emotions and Passions.*

SO intimately connected are the soul and body, that every agitation in the former produceth a visible effect upon the latter. There is, at the same time, a wonderful uniformity in that operation; each class of emotions and passions being invariably attended with an external appearance peculiar to itself.\* These external appearances or signs may not improperly be considered as a natural lan-

\* Omnis enim motus animi, suum quemdam a natura habet vultum et sonum et gestum. *Cicero*, l. iii. *De Oratore*.



guage, expressing to all beholders emotions and passions as they arise in the heart. Hope, fear, joy, grief, are displayed externally: the character of a man can be read in his face; and beauty, which makes so deep an impression, is known to result, not so much from regular features, as a fine complexion, as from good nature, good sense, sprightliness, sweetness, or other mental quality, expressed upon the countenance. Though perfect skill in that language be rare, yet what is generally known is sufficient for the ordinary purposes of life. But by what means we come to understand the language, is a point of some intricacy: it cannot be by sight merely; for upon the most attentive inspection of the human face, all that can be discerned, are figure, colour, and motion, which, singly or combined, never can represent a passion, nor a sentiment: the external sign is indeed visible; but to understand its meaning we must be able to connect it with the passion that causes it, an operation far beyond the reach of eye-sight. Where, then, is the instructor to be found that can unveil this secret connexion? If we apply to experience, it is yielded, that from long and diligent observation, we may gather, in some measure, in what manner those we are acquainted with express their passions externally: but with respect to strangers, we are left in the dark; and yet we are not puzzled about the meaning of these external expressions in a stranger, more than in a bosom-companion. Further, had we no other means but experience for understanding the external signs of passion, we could not expect any degree of skill in the bulk of individuals: yet matters are so much better ordered, that the external expressions of passions form a language understood by all, by the young as well as the old, by the ignorant as well as the learned: I



talk of the plain and legible characters of that language; for undoubtedly we are much indebted to experience in decyphering the dark and more delicate expressions. Where then shall we apply for a solution of this intricate problem, which seems to penetrate deep into human nature? In my mind it will be convenient to suspend the inquiry, till we are better acquainted with the nature of external signs, and with their operations. These articles, therefore, shall be premised.

The external signs of passion are of two kinds, voluntary and involuntary. The voluntary signs are also of two kinds: some are arbitrary, some natural. Words are obviously voluntary signs: and they are also arbitrary; excepting a few simple sounds expressive of certain internal emotions, which sounds being the same in all languages, must be the work of nature: thus the unpremeditated tones of admiration are the same in all men; as also of compassion, resentment, and despair. Dramatic writers ought to be well acquainted with this natural language of passion: the chief talent of such a writer is a ready command of the expressions that nature dictates to every person, when any vivid emotion struggles for utterance; and the chief talent of a fine reader is a ready command of tones suited to these expressions.

The other kind of voluntary signs comprehends certain attitudes or gestures that naturally accompany certain emotions with a surprising uniformity; excessive joy is expressed by leaping, dancing, or some elevation of the body: excessive grief, by sinking or depressing it: and prostration and kneeling have been employed by all nations, and in all ages, to signify profound veneration. Another circumstance, still more than uniformity, demonstrates these gestures to be natural, viz. their remarkable



conformity or resemblance to the passions that produce them.\* Joy, which is a cheerful elevation of mind, is expressed by an elevation of body: pride, magnanimity, courage, and the whole tribe of elevating passions, are expressed by external gestures that are the same as to the circumstance of elevation, however distinguishable in other respects; and hence an erect posture is a sign or expression of dignity:

Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
Godlike erect, with native honour clad,  
In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all.

*Paradise Lost, book iv.*

Grief, on the other hand, as well as respect, which depress the mind, cannot, for that reason, be expressed more significantly than by a similar depression of the body; and hence, *to be cast down*, is a common phrase, signifying to be grieved or dispirited.†

One would not imagine who has not given peculiar attention, that the body should be susceptible of such variety of attitude and motion as readily to accompany every different emotion with a corresponding expression. Humility, for example, is expressed naturally by hanging the head; arrogance, by its elevation; and languor or despondence by reclining it to one side. The expressions of the hands are manifold: by different attitudes

\* See chapter II. part vi.

† Instead of a complimentary speech in addressing a superior, the Chinese deliver the compliment in writing, the smallness of the letters being proportioned to the degree of respect; and the highest compliment is, to make the letters so small as not to be legible. Here is a clear evidence of a mental connexion between respect and littleness: a man humbles himself before his superior: and endeavours to contract himself and his hand-writing within the smallest bounds.



pro- and motions, they express desire, hope, fear; they  
on of assist us in promising, in inviting, in keeping one  
vide, at a distance; they are made instruments of threat-  
f ele- ning, of supplication, of praise, and of horror;  
ture they are employed in approving, in refusing, in  
leva- questioning; in showing our joy, our sorrow, our  
ects: doubts, our regret, our admiration. These expres-  
ssion sions, so obedient to passion, are extremely diffi-  
cult to be imitated in a calm state: the ancients,  
sensible of the advantage as well as difficulty of  
having these expressions at command, bestowed  
much time and care in collecting them from obser-  
vation, and in digesting them into a practical art,  
which was taught in their schools as an important  
branch of education. Certain sounds are by na-  
ture allotted to each passion for expressing it ex-  
ternally. The actor who has these sounds at com-  
mand to captivate the ear, is mighty: if he have  
also proper gestures at command to captivate the  
eye, he is irresistible.

The foregoing signs, though in a strict sense vo-  
luntary, cannot, however, be restrained but with the  
utmost difficulty when prompted by passion. We  
scarce need a stronger proof than the gestures of a  
keen player at bowls: observe only how he writhes  
his body, in order to restore a stray bowl to the  
right track. It is one article of good breeding, to  
suppress, as much as possible, these external signs  
of passion, that we may not in company appear too  
warm, or too interested. The same observation  
holds in speech: a passion, it is true, when in ex-  
treme, is silent;\* but when less violent it must be  
vented in words, which have a peculiar force not  
to be equalled in a sedate composition. The ease  
and security we have in a confidant, may encourage

\* See Chapter XVII.



us to talk of ourselves and of our feelings: but the cause is more general: for it operates when we are alone as well as in company. Passion is the cause; for in many instances it is no slight gratification, to vent a passion externally by words as well as by gestures. Some passions when at a certain height, impel us so strongly to vent them in words, that we speak with an audible voice even when there is none to listen. It is that circumstance in passion which justifies soliloques; and it is that circumstance which proves them to be natural.\* The mind sometimes favours this impulse of passion, by bestowing a temporary sensibility upon any object at hand, in order to make it a confidant. Thus in the *Winter's Tale*,† Antigonus addresses himself to an infant whom he was ordered to expose;

Come, poor babe,  
I have heard, but not believ'd, the spirits of the dead,  
May walk again: if such things be, thy mother  
Appear'd to me last night; for ne'er was dream  
So like a waking.

The involuntary signs, which are all of them natural, are either peculiar to one passion, or com-

\* Though a soliloquy in the perturbation of passion is undoubtedly natural, and indeed, not unfrequent in real life; yet Congreve, who himself has penned several good soliloquies, yields, with more candour than knowledge, that they are unnatural; and he only pretends to justify them from necessity. This he does in the dedication of the *Double Dealer*, in the following words: "When a man in a soliloquy reasons with himself, and *pro's* and *con's* and weighs all his designs; we ought not to imagine, that this man either talks to us, or to himself, he is only thinking, and thinking (frequently) such matter as it were inexcusable folly in him to speak. But because we are concealed spectators of the plot in agitation, and the poet finds it necessary to let us know the whole mystery of his contrivance, he is willing to inform us of this person's thoughts; and to that end is forced to make use of the expedient of speech, no other better way being yet invented for the communication of thought."

† Act III. Sc. 6.



mon to many. Every vivid passion hath an external expression peculiar to itself; not excepting pleasant passions; witness admiration and mirth. The pleasant emotions that are less vivid have one common expression; from which we may gather the strength of the emotion, but scarce the kind: we perceive a cheerful or contented look; and we can make no more of it. Painful passions, being all of them violent, are distinguishable from each other by their external expressions: thus fear, shame, anger, anxiety, dejection, despair, have each of them peculiar expressions; which are apprehended without the least confusion: some painful passions produce violent effects upon the body, trembling, for example, starting, and swooning; but these effects, depending in a good measure upon singularity of constitution, are not uniform in all men.

The involuntary signs, such of them as are displayed upon the countenance, are of two kinds: some are temporary, making their appearance with the emotions that produce them, and vanishing with these emotions; others, being formed gradually by some violent passion often recurring, become permanent signs of that passion, and serve to denote the disposition or temper. The face of an infant indicates no particular disposition, because it cannot be marked with any character, to which time is necessary: even the temporary signs are extremely awkward, being the first rude essays of Nature to discover internal feelings; thus the shrieking of a new-born infant, without tears or sobbings, is plainly an attempt to weep; and some of these temporary signs, as smiling and frowning, cannot be observed for some months after birth. Permanent signs, formed in youth while the body is soft and flexible, are preserved entire by the



firmness and solidity that the body acquires, and are never obliterated even by a change of temper. Such signs are not produced after the fibres become rigid; some violent cases excepted, such as reiterated fits of the gout or stone through a course of time: but these signs are not so obstinate as what are produced in youth; for when the cause is removed, they gradually wear away, and at last vanish.

The natural signs of emotions, voluntary and involuntary, being nearly the same in all men, form an universal language, which no distance of place, no difference of tribe, no diversity of tongue, can darken or render doubtful: even education, though of mighty influence, hath not power to vary nor sophisticate, far less to destroy, their signification. This is a wise appointment of Providence: for if these signs, were like words, arbitrary and variable, the thoughts and volitions of strangers would be entirely hid from us; which would prove a great, or rather invincible, obstruction to the formation of societies: but as matters are ordered, the external appearances of joy, grief, anger, fear, shame, and of the other passions, forming an universal language, open a direct avenue to the heart. As the arbitrary signs vary in every country there could be no communication of thoughts among different nations, were it not for the natural signs, in which all agree: and as the discovering passions instantly at their birth, is essential to our well-being, and often necessary for self-preservation, the Author of our nature, attentive to our wants, hath provided a passage to the heart, which never can be obstructed while eye-sight remains.

In an inquiry concerning the external signs of passion, actions must not be overlooked: for though singly they afford no clear light, they are, upon the



whole, the best interpreters of the heart.\* By observing a man's conduct for a course of time, we discover unerringly the various passions that move him to action, what he loves, and what he hates. In our younger years, every single action is a mark, no at all ambiguous, of the temper; for in childhood there is little or no disguise: the subject becomes more intricate in advanced age; but even there, dissimulation is seldom carried on for any length of time. And thus the conduct of life is the most perfect expression of the internal disposition. It merits not indeed the title of an universal language; because it is not thoroughly understood but by those of penetrating genius or extensive observation: it is a language, however, which every one can decypher in some measure; and, which, joined with the other external signs, affords sufficient means for the direction of our conduct with regard to others: if we commit any mistake when such light is afforded, it can never be the effect of unavoidable ignorance, but of rashness or inattention.

Reflecting on the various expressions of our emotions, we recognise the anxious care of Nature to discover men to each other. Strong emotions, as above hinted, beget an impatience to express them externally by speech and other voluntary signs,

\* The actions here chiefly in view, are what a passion suggests in order to its gratification. Beside these, actions are occasionally exerted to give some vent to a passion, without any view to an ultimate gratification. Such occasional action is characteristic of the passion in a high degree; and for that reason when happily invented, has a wonderful good effect:

*Hamlet.* Oh most pernicious woman!

Oh villain, villain, smiling damned villain!

My tables—meet it as I set it down,

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;

At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.

So, uncle, there you are.

[Writing.]

*Hamlet*, Act 1. Sc. 8.



which cannot be suppressed without a painful effort: thus a sudden fit of passion is a common excuse for indecent behaviour or opprobrious language. As to involuntary signs, these are altogether unavoidable: no volition or effort can prevent the shaking of the limbs nor a pale visage, in a fit of terror: the blood flies to the face upon a sudden emotion of shame, in spite of all opposition:

Vergogna, che'n altrui stampo natura,  
Non si puo' rinegar: che se tu' tenti  
Di cacciarla dal cor, fugge nel volto.

*Pastor Fido*, Act II. Sc. 5.

Emotions, indeed, properly so called, which are quiescent, produce no remarkable signs externally. Nor is it necessary that the more deliberate passions should, because the operation of such passions is neither sudden nor violent: these however, remain not altogether in obscurity; for being more frequent than violent passion, the bulk of our actions are directed by them. Actions, therefore, display, with sufficient evidence, the more deliberate passions; and complete the admirable system of external signs, by which we become skilful in human nature.

What comes next in order is, to examine the effects produced upon a spectator by external signs of passion. None of these signs are beheld with indifference; they are productive of various emotions, tending all of them to ends wise and good. This curious subject makes a capital branch of human nature: it is peculiarly useful to writers who deal in the pathetic; and to history-painters it is indispensable.

It is mentioned above, that each passion, or class of passions, hath its peculiar signs; and, with respect to the present subject, it must be added, that



these invariably make certain impressions on a spectator: the external signs of joy, for example, produce a cheerful emotion; the external signs of grief produce pity: and the external signs of rage produce a sort of terror even in those who are not aimed at.

Secondly, it is natural to think, that pleasant passions should express themselves externally by signs that to a spectator appear agreeable, and painful passions by signs that to him appear disagreeable. This conjecture, which Nature suggests, is confirmed by experience. Pride possibly may be thought an exception, the external signs of which are disagreeable, though it be commonly reckoned a pleasant passion: but pride is not an exception, being in reality a mixed passion, partly pleasant, partly painful; for when a proud man confines his thoughts to himself, and to his own dignity or importance, the passion is pleasant, and its external signs agreeable; but as pride chiefly consists in undervaluing or contemning others, it is so far painful, and its external signs disagreeable.

Thirdly, it is laid down above, that an agreeable object produceth always a pleasant emotion, and a disagreeable object one that is painful.\* According to this law, the external signs of a pleasant passion, being agreeable must produce in the spectator a pleasant emotion: and the external signs of a painful passion, being disagreeable, must produce in him a painful emotion.

Fourthly, in the present chapter it is observed, that pleasant passions are, for the most part, expressed externally in one uniform manner; but that all the painful passions are distinguishable from each other by their external expressions. The

\* See Chapter II. Part vii.



emotions accordingly raised in a spectator by external signs of pleasant passions, have little variety: these emotions are pleasant or cheerful, and we have not words to reach a more particular description. But the external signs of painful passions produce in the spectator emotions of different kinds: the emotions, for example, raised by external signs of grief, of remorse, of anger, of envy, of malice, are clearly distinguishable from each other.

Fifthly, External signs of painful passions are some of them *attractive*, some *repulsive*. Of every painful passion that is also disagreeable,\* the external signs are repulsive, repelling the spectator from the object: and the passion raised by such external signs may be also considered as repulsive. Painful passions that are agreeable produce an opposite effect: their external signs are attractive, drawing the spectator to them, and producing in him benevolence to the person upon whom these signs appear; witness distress painted on the countenance, which instantaneously inspires the spectator with pity, and impels him to afford relief. And the passion raised by such external signs may also be considered as attractive. The cause of this difference among the painful passions raised by their external signs may be readily gathered from what is laid down, Chapter II. Part vii.

It is now time to look back to the question proposed in the beginning, How we come to understand external signs, so as to refer each sign to its proper passion? We have seen that this branch of knowledge cannot be derived originally from sight, nor from experience. Is it then implanted in us by nature? The following considerations will in-

\* See passions explained as agreeable or disagreeable, Chapter II. Part ii.



Oblige us to answer the question in the affirmative. In the first place, the external signs of passion must be natural; for they are invariably the same in every country, and among the different tribes of men: pride, for example, is always expressed by an erect posture, reverence by prostration, and sorrow by a dejected look. Secondly, we are not even indebted to experience for the knowledge that these expressions are natural and universal: for we are so framed as to have an innate conviction of the fact: let a man change his habitation to the other side of the globe, he will, from the accustomed signs, infer the passion of fear among his new neighbours, with as little hesitation as he did at home. But why, after all, involve ourselves in preliminary observations, when the doubt may be directly solved as follows? That, if the meaning of external signs be not derived to us from sight, nor from experience, there is no remaining source whence it can be derived but from nature.

We may then venture to pronounce, with some degree of assurance, that man is provided by nature with a sense or faculty that lays open to him every passion by means of its external expressions. And we cannot entertain any reasonable doubt of this, when we reflect, that the meaning of external signs is not hid even from infants: an infant is remarkably affected with the passions of its nurse expressed in her countenance; a smile cheers it, a frown makes it afraid: but fear cannot be without apprehending danger; and what danger can the infant apprehend, unless it be sensible that its nurse is angry? We must, therefore admit, that a child can read anger in its nurse's face; of which it must be sensible intuitively, for it has no other mean of knowledge. I do not affirm, that these particulars are clearly apprehended by the child; for to pro-



duce clear and distinct perceptions, reflection and experience are requisite: but that even an infant, when afraid, must have some notion of its being in danger, is evident.

That we should be conscious intuitively of a passion from its external expressions, is conformable to the analogy of nature: the knowledge of that language is of too great importance to be left upon experience; because a foundation so uncertain and precarious, would prove a great obstacle to the formation of societies. Wisely, therefore, is it ordered, and agreeably to the system of Providence, that we should have nature for our instructor.

Manifold and admirable are the purposes to which the external signs of passion are made subservient by the author of our nature: those occasionally mentioned above, make but a part. Several final causes remain to be unfolded; and to that task I proceed with alacrity. In the first place, the signs of internal agitation displayed externally to every spectator, tend to fix the signification of many words. The only effectual means to ascertain the meaning of any doubtful word, is an appeal to the thing it represents: and hence the ambiguity of words expressive of things that are not objects of external sense; for in that case an appeal is denied. Passion, strictly speaking, is not an object of external sense: but its external signs are; and by means of these signs, passions may be appealed to with tolerable accuracy: thus the words that denote our passions, next to those that denote external objects, have the most distinct meaning. Words signifying internal action and the more delicate feelings, are less distinct. This defect with regard to internal action, is what chiefly occasions the intricacy of logic: the terms of that science are far



from being sufficiently ascertained, even after much care and labour bestowed by an eminent writer;\* to whom, however, the world is greatly indebted, for removing a mountain of rubbish, and moulding the subject into a rational and correct form. The same defect is remarkable in criticism, which has for its object the more delicate feelings; the terms that denote these feelings being not more distinct than those of logic. To reduce the science of criticism to any regular form, has never once been attempted: however rich the ore may be, no critical chemist has been found, to analyse its constituent parts, and to distinguish each by its own name.

In the second place, Society among individuals is greatly promoted by that universal language. Looks and gestures give direct access to the heart, and lead us to select, with tolerable accuracy, the persons who are worthy of our confidence. It is surprising how quickly, and for the most part how correctly, we judge of character from external appearance.

Thirdly, After social intercourse is commenced, these external signs, which diffuse through a whole assembly the feelings of each individual, contribute above all other means to improve the social affections. Language, no doubt, is the most comprehensive vehicle for communicating emotions: but in expedition, as well as in power of conviction, it falls short of the signs under consideration; the involuntary signs especially, which are incapable of deceit. Where the countenance, the tones, the gestures, the actions, join with the words in communicating emotions, these united have a force irresistible: thus all the pleasant emotions of the human heart, with all the social and virtuous affec-

\* Locke.



tions, are, by means of these external signs, not only perceived but felt. By this admirable contrivance, conversation becomes that lively and animating amusement, without which life would at best be insipid: one joyful countenance spreads cheerfulness instantaneously through a multitude of spectators.

Fourthly, Dissocial passions, being hurtful by prompting violence and mischief, are noted by the most conspicuous external signs, in order to put us upon our guard: thus anger and revenge, especially when sudden, display themselves on the countenance in legible characters.\* The external signs again of every passion that threatens danger raise in us the passion of fear: which frequently operating without reason or reflection, moves us by a sudden impulse to avoid the impending danger.†

In the fifth place, These external signs are remarkably subservient to morality. A painful passion, being accompanied with disagreeable external signs, must produce in every spectator a painful emotion: but then, if the passion be social, the emotion it produces is attractive, and connects the spectator with the person who suffers. Dissocial

\* Rough and blunt manners are allied to anger by an internal feeling, as well as by external expressions resembling in a faint degree those of anger: therefore such manners are easily heightened into anger; and savages for that reason are prone to anger. Thus rough and blunt manners are unhappy in two respects: first, they are readily converted into anger; and next, the change being imperceptible because of the similitude of their external signs, the person against whom the anger is directed is not put upon his guard. It is for these reasons a great object in society, to correct such manners, and to bring on a habit of sweetness and calmness. This temper has two opposite good effects. First, it is not easily provoked to wrath. Next, the interval being great between it and real anger, a person of that temper who receives an affront, has many changes to go through, before his anger be inflamed: these changes have each of them their external sign; and the offending party is put upon his guard, to retire, or to endeavour a reconciliation.

† See chapter II. part i. sect. 6.



passions only are productive of repulsive emotions, involving the spectator's aversion, and frequently his indignation. This beautiful contrivance makes us cling to the virtuous, and abhor the wicked.

Sixthly, Of all the external signs of passion, those of affliction or distress are the most illustrious with respect to a final cause. They are illustrious by the singularity of their contrivance, and also by inspiring sympathy, a passion to which human society is indebted for its greatest blessing, that of providing relief for the distressed. A subject so interesting deserves a leisurely and attentive examination. The conformity of the nature of man to his external circumstances is in every particular wonderful; his nature makes him prone to society; and society is necessary to his well-being, because in a solitary state he is a helpless being, destitute of support, and in his manifold distresses destitute of relief: but mutual support, the shining attribute of society, is of too great moment to be left dependent upon cool reason; it is ordered more wisely, and with greater conformity to the analogy of nature, that it should be enforced even instinctively by the passion of sympathy. Here sympathy makes a capital figure, and contributes, more than any other means, to make life easy and comfortable. But, however essential the sympathy of others may be to our well-being, one beforehand would not readily conceive how it could be raised by external signs of distress: for considering the analogy of nature, if these signs be agreeable, they must give birth to a pleasant emotion leading every beholder to be pleased with human woes; if disagreeable, as they undoubtedly are, ought they not naturally to repel the spectator from them, in order to be relieved from pain? Such would be the reasoning beforehand; and



such would be the effect were man purely a selfish being. But the benevolence of our nature gives a very different direction to the painful passion of sympathy, and to the desire involved in it: instead of avoiding distress, we fly to it in order to afford relief: and our sympathy cannot be otherwise gratified but by giving all the succour in our power.\* Thus external signs of distress, though disagreeable, are attractive; and the sympathy they inspire is a powerful cause, impelling us to afford relief even to a stranger, as if he were our friend or relation.†

The effects produced in all beholders by external signs of passion, tend so visibly to advance the social state, that I must indulge my heart with a more narrow inspection of this admirable branch of the human constitution. These external signs, being all of them resolvable into colour, figure, and motion, should not naturally make any deep impression on a spectator: and supposing them qualified for making deep impressions, we have seen above, that the effects they produce are not such as might be expected. We cannot therefore account

\* See Chapter II. Part vii.

† It is a noted observation, that the deepest tragedies are the most crowded; which in a slight view will be thought an unaccountable bias in human nature. Love of novelty, desire of occupation, beauty of action, make us fond of theatrical representations; and, when once engaged, we must follow the story to the conclusion, whatever distress it may create. But we generally become wise by experience: and when we foresee what pain we shall suffer during the course of the representation, is it not surprising that persons of reflection do not avoid such spectacles altogether? And yet one who has scarce recovered from the distress of a deep tragedy, resolves coolly and deliberately to go to the very next, without the slightest obstruction from self-love. The whole mystery is explained by a single observation, That sympathy, though painful, is attractive, and attaches us to an object in distress, the opposition of self-love notwithstanding, which should prompt us to fly from it. And by this curious mechanism it is, that persons of any degree of sensibility are attracted by affliction still more than by joy.



otherwise for the operation of these external signs, but by ascribing it to the original constitution of human nature; to improve the social state, by making us instinctively rejoice with the glad of heart, weep with the mourner, and shun those who threaten danger, is a contrivance no less illustrious for its wisdom than for its benevolence. With respect to the external signs of distress in particular, to judge of the excellency of their contrivance, we need only reflect upon several other means seemingly more natural, that would not have answered the end proposed. What if the external signs of joy were disagreeable, and the external signs of distress agreeable? This is no whimsical supposition, because there appears not any necessary connexion between these signs and the emotions produced by them in a spectator. Admitting then the supposition, the question is, How would our sympathy operate? There is no occasion to deliberate for an answer: sympathy would be destructive, and not beneficial: for, supposing the external signs of joy disagreeable, the happiness of others would be our aversion; and supposing the external signs of grief agreeable, the distresses of others would be our entertainment. I make a second supposition, That the external signs of distress were indifferent to us, and productive neither of pleasure nor of pain. This would annihilate the strongest branch of sympathy; that which is raised by means of sight: and it is evident that reflective sympathy, felt by those only who have great sensibility, would not have any extensive effect. I shall draw nearer to truth in a third supposition, That the external signs of distress being disagreeable, were productive of a painful repulsive emotion. Sympathy upon that supposition would not be annihilated: but it would be render-



ed useless ; for it would be gratified by flying from or avoiding the object, instead of clinging to it and affording relief : the condition of man would in reality be worse than if sympathy were totally eradicated : because sympathy would only serve to plague those who feel it, without producing any good to the afflicted.

Loth to quit so interesting a subject, I add a reflection, with which I shall conclude. The external signs of passion are a strong indication, that man, by his very constitution, is framed to be open and sincere. A child, in all things obedient to the impulse of nature, hides none of its emotions : the savage and clown, who have no guide but pure nature, expose their hearts to view, by giving way to all the natural signs. And even when men learn to dissemble their sentiments, and when behaviour degenerates into art, there still remain checks, that keep dissimulation within bounds, and prevent a great part of its mischievous effects : the total suppression of the voluntary signs during any vivid passion, begets the utmost uneasiness, which cannot be endured for any considerable time : this operation becomes indeed less painful by habit ; but, luckily, the involuntary signs cannot, by any effort, be suppressed, nor even dissembled. An absolute hypocrisy, by which the character is concealed, and a fictitious one assumed, is made impracticable ; and nature has thereby prevented much harm to society. We may pronounce, therefore, that Nature, herself sincere and candid, intends that mankind should preserve the same character, by cultivating simplicity and truth, and banishing every sort of dissimulation that tends to mischief.



## CHAPTER XVI.

*Sentiments.*

EVERY thought prompted by passion, is termed *a sentiment*.\* To have a general notion of the different passions, will not alone enable an artist to make a just representation of any passion: he ought, over and above, to know the various appearances of the same passion in different persons. Passions receive a tincture from every peculiarity of character; and for that reason it rarely happens, that a passion, in the different circumstances of feeling, of sentiment, and of expression, is precisely the same in any two persons. Hence the following rule concerning dramatic and epic compositions: that a passion be adjusted to the character, the sentiments to the passion, and the language to the sentiments. If nature be not faithfully copied in each of these, a defect in execution is perceived: there may appear some resemblance; but the picture, upon the whole, will be insipid, through want of grace and delicacy. A painter, in order to represent the various attitudes of the body, ought to be intimately acquainted with muscular motion: no less intimately acquainted with emotions and characters ought a writer to be, in order to represent the various attitudes of the mind. A general notion of the passions, in their grosser differences of strong and weak, elevated and humble, severe and gay, is far from being sufficient:

\* See Appendix, sect. 32.



pictures formed so superficially have little resemblance, and no expression; yet it will appear by and by, that in many instances our artists are deficient even in that superficial knowledge.

In handling the present subject, it would be endless to trace even the ordinary passions through their nice and minute differences. Mine shall be an humbler task; which is, to select from the best writers instances of faulty sentiments, after paving the way by some general observations.

To talk in the language of music, each passion, hath a certain tone, to which every sentiment proceeding from it ought to be tuned with the greatest accuracy: which is no easy work, especially where such harmony ought to be supported during the course of a long theatrical representation. In order to reach such delicacy of execution, it is necessary that a writer assume the precise character and passion of the personage represented; which requires an uncommon genius. But it is the only difficulty; for the writer, who, annihilating himself, can thus become another person, need be in no pain about the sentiments that belong to the assumed character: these will flow without the least study, or even preconception; and will frequently be as delightfully new to himself as to his reader. But if a lively picture even of a single emotion require an effort of genius, how much greater the effort to compose a passionate dialogue with as many different tones of passion as there are speakers? With what ductility of feeling must that writer be endowed, who approaches perfection in such a work: when it is necessary to assume different and even opposite characters and passions, in the quickest succession? Yet this work, difficult as it is, yields to that of composing a dialogue in genteel comedy, exhibiting characters without passion.



The reason is that the different tones of character are more delicate and less in sight, than those of passion; and, accordingly, many writers, who have no genius for drawing characters, make a shift to represent, tolerably well, an ordinary passion in its simple movements. But of all works of this kind, what is truly the most difficult, is a characteristical dialogue upon any philosophical subject: to interweave characters with reasoning, by suiting to the character of each speaker, a peculiarity not only of thought, but of expression, requires the perfection of genius, taste, and judgment.

How nice-dialogue-writing is, will be evident, even without reasoning, from the miserable compositions of that kind found without number in all languages. The art of mimicing any singularity in gesture or in voice, is a rare talent, though directed by sight and hearing, the acutest and most lively of our external senses: how much more rare must the talent be, of imitating characters and internal emotions, tracing all their different tints, and representing them in a lively manner by natural sentiments properly expressed? The truth is, such execution is too delicate for an ordinary genius: and for that reason, the bulk of writers, instead of expressing a passion as one does who feels it, content themselves with describing it in the language of a spectator. To awake passion by an internal effort merely, without any external cause, requires great sensibility: and yet that operation is necessary, no less to the writer than to the actor; because none but those who actually feel a passion, can represent it to the life. The writer's part is the more complicated: he must add composition to passion; and must, in the quickest succession, adopt every different character. But a very hum-



ble flight of imagination, may serve to convert a writer into a spectator; so as to figure, in some obscure manner, an action as passing in his sight and hearing. In that figured situation, being led naturally to write like a spectator, he entertains his readers with his own reflections, with cool description, and florid declamation; instead of making them eye-witnesses, as it were, to a real event, and to every movement of genuine passion.\* Thus most of our plays appear to be cast in the same mould; personages without character, the mere outlines of passion, a tiresome monotony, and a pompous declamatory style.†

This descriptive manner of representing passion, is a very cold entertainment: our sympathy is not raised by description; we must first be lulled into a dream of reality, and every thing must appear as passing in our sight.‡ Unhappy is the player of genius who acts a capital part in what may be termed a *descriptive tragedy*; after assuming the very passion that is to be represented, how is he cramped in action, when he must utter, not the sentiments of the passion he feels, but a cold description in the language of a bystander? It is

\* In the *Æneid*, the hero is made to describe himself in the following words: *Sum pius Æneus, fama super æthera notus*. Virgil could never have been guilty of an impropriety so gross, had he assumed the personage of his hero, instead of uttering the sentiments of a spectator. Nor would Xenophon have made the following speech for Cyrus the younger, to his Grecian auxiliaries, whom he was leading against his brother Artaxerxes: "I have chosen you, O Greeks! my auxiliaries, not to enlarge my army, for I have *Barbarians* without number; but because you surpass all the *Barbarians* in valour and military discipline." This sentiment is Xenophon's, for surely Cyrus did not reckon his countrymen *Barbarians*.

† "Chez Racine tout est sentiment; il a su faire parler *chacun pour soi*, et c'est en cela qu'il est vraiment unique parmi les auteurs dramatiques de sa nation."

Rousseau.

‡ See Chapter II, Part I, Sect. 7.



that imperfection, I am persuaded, in the bulk of our plays, which confines our stage almost entirely to Shakspeare, notwithstanding his many irregularities. In our late English tragedies, we sometimes find sentiments tolerably well adapted to a plain passion: but we must not, in any of them, expect a sentiment expressive of character; and, upon that very account, our late performances of the dramatic kind are for the most part intolerably insipid.

Looking back upon what is said, I am in some apprehension of not being perfectly understood; for it is not easy to avoid obscurity in handling a matter so complicated: but I promise to set it in the clearest light, by adding example to precept. The first examples shall be of sentiments that appear the legitimate offspring of passion; to which shall be opposed what are descriptive only, and illegitimate: and in making this comparison, I borrow my instances from Shakspeare and Corneille, who for genius in dramatic composition stand upmost in the rolls of fame.

Shakspeare shall furnish the first example, being of sentiments dictated by a violent and perturbed passion:

*Lear.*—————Filial ingratitude!

Is it not, as if this mouth should tear this hand  
For lifting food to't?—But I'll punish home;  
No, I'll weep no more.——In such a night,  
To shut me out!——Pour on, I will endure.  
In such a night as this! O Regan, Gonerill,  
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all—  
O! that way madness lies; let me shun that;  
No more of that.—————

*Kent.* Good, my Lord, enter here.

*Lear.* Pr'ythee, go in thyself, seek thine own ease,  
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder  
On things would hurt me more:—but I'll go in;



In, boy, go first. You houseless poverty—  
 Nay, get thee in; I'll pray, and then I'll sleep—  
 Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,  
 That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm!  
 How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,  
 Your loop'd and window'd raggedness defend you  
 From seasons such as these?—O I have ta'en  
 Too little care of this! take physic Pomp;  
 Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,  
 That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,  
 And show the heavens more just.

*King Lear, Act III. Sc. 5.*

I give another example of the same kind, expressing sentiments arising from remorse and despair:

*Othello.* Lo! I have a weapon:  
 A better never did itself sustain  
 Upon a soldier's thigh. I've seen the day,  
 That with this little arm, and this good sword,  
 I've made my way through more impediments  
 Than twenty times your stop. But, oh vain boast!  
 Who can control his fate? 'tis not so now.  
 Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;  
 Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,  
 The very sea-mark of my utmost sail.  
 Do you go back dismay'd? 'tis a lost fear.  
 Man but a rush against Othello's breast,  
 And he retires. Where should Othello go?  
 Now—how dost thou look now? Oh ill-starr'd wench!  
 Pale as thy smock! When we shall meet at compt,  
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heav'n,  
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl;  
 Ev'n like thy chastity. O cursed slave!  
 Whip me, ye devils,  
 From the possession of this heav'nly sight;  
 Blow me about in winds, roast me in sulphur,  
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire—  
 Oh, Desdemona! Desdemona! dead! dead! oh! oh!

*Othello, Act V. Sc. 2.*

The sentiments here displayed flow so naturally from the passions represented, that we cannot conceive any imitation more perfect.



With regard to the French author, truth obliges me to acknowledgè, that he describes in the style of a spectator, instead of expressing passion like one who feels it ; which naturally betrays him into a tiresome monotony, and a pompous declamatory style.\* It is scarce necessary to give examples, for he never varies from that tone. I shall, however, take two passages at a venture, in order, to be con-

\* This criticism reaches the French dramatic writers in general, with very few exceptions: their tragedies, excepting those of Racine, are mostly, if not totally, descriptive. Corneille led the way; and later writers, imitating his manner, have accustomed the French ear to a style, formal, pompous, declamatory, which suits not with any passion. Hence, to burlesque a French tragedy, is not more difficult than to burlesque a stiff solemn sop. The facility of the operation has in Paris introduced a singular amusement, which is, to burlesque the more successful tragedies in a sort of farce, called a *parody*. La Motte, who himself appears to have been sorely galled by some of these productions, acknowledges, that no more is necessary to give them currency but barely to vary the *dramatis personæ*, and instead of kings and heroes, queens and princesses, to substitute tinkers and tailors, milkmaids and seamstresses. The declamatory style, so different from the genuine expression of passion, passes in some measure unobserved; when great personages are the speakers: but in the mouths of the vulgar the impropriety with regard to the speaker as well as to the passion represented, is so remarkable as to become ridiculous. A tragedy, where every passion is made to speak in its natural tone, is not liable to be thus burlesqued: the same passion is by all men expressed nearly in the same manner; and, therefore, the genuine expressions of a passion cannot be ridiculous in the mouth of any man who is susceptible of the passion.

It is a well known fact, that to an English ear, the French actors appear to pronounce with too great rapidity: a complaint much insisted on by Cibber in particular, who had frequently heard the famous Baron upon the French stage. This may in some measure be attributed to our want of facility in the French tongue; as foreigners generally imagine that every language is pronounced too quick by natives. But that it is not the sole cause, will be probable from a fact directly opposite, that the French are not a little disgusted with the languidness, as they term it, of the English pronunciation. May not this difference of taste be derived from what is observed above? The pronunciation of the genuine language of a passion is necessarily directed by the nature of the passion, particularly by the slowness or celerity of its progress: plaintive passions, which are the most frequent in tragedy, having a slow motion, dictate a slow pronunciation: in declamation, on the contrary, the speaker warms gradually; and, as he warms, he naturally accelerates his pronunciation. But, as the French have formed their tone of pronunciation upon Corneille's declamatory tragedies, and the English upon the more natural language of Shakspeare, it is not surprising that custom should produce such difference of taste in the two nations.



fronted with those transcribed above. In the tragedy of *Cinna*, *Æmilia*, after the conspiracy was discovered, having nothing in view but racks and death to herself and her lover, receives a pardon from Augustus, attended with the brightest circumstances of magnanimity and tenderness. This is a lucky situation for representing the passions of surprise and gratitude in their different stages, which seem naturally to be what follow. These passions, raised at once to the utmost pitch, and being at first too big for utterance, must, for some moments, be expressed by violent gestures only : as soon as there is vent for words, the first expressions are broken and interrupted : at last we ought to expect a tide of intermingled sentiments, occasioned by the fluctuation of the mind between the two passions. *Æmilia* is made to behave in a very different manner : with extreme coolness she describes her own situation, as if she were merely a spectator, or rather the poet takes the task off her hands :

Et je me rends, Seigneur, à ces hautes bontés :  
 Je recouvre la vûe auprès de leurs clartés.  
 Je connois mon forfait qui me sembloit justice ;  
 Et ce que n'avoit pû la terreur du supplice,  
 Je sens naître en mon ame un repentir puissant,  
 Et mon cœur en secret me dit, qu'il y consent.  
 Le ciel a résolu votre grandeur suprême ;  
 Et pour preuve, Seigneur, je n'en veux que moi-même  
 J'ose avec vanité me donner cet éclat,  
 Puisqu'il change mon cœur, qu'il vent changer l'état,  
 Ma haine va mourir, que j'ai crue immortelle ;  
 Elle est morte, et ce cœur devient sujet fidèle ;  
 Et prenant désormais cette haine en horreur,  
 L'ardeur de vous servir succède à sa fureur.

Act V. Sc. 5.

In the tragedy of *Sertorius*, the Queen, surprised with the news that her lover was assassinated, in-



stead of venting any passion, degenerates into a cool spectator, and undertakes to instruct the bystanders how a queen ought to behave on such an occasion :

*Vivante.* Il m'en fait voir ensemble, et l'autre, et la cause  
Par cet assassinat c'est de moi qu'on dispose,  
C'est mon trône, c'est moi qu'on pretend conquerir ;  
Et c'est mon juste choix qui seul l'a fait perir.  
Madame, après sa perte, et parmi ces alarmes,  
N'attendez point de moi de soupirs, ni de larmes ;  
Ce sont amusements que dédaigne aisement  
Le prompt et noble orgueil d'un vif ressentiment.  
Qui pleure, l'affoiblit ; qui soupire, l'exhale ;  
Et ma douleur soumise aux soins de le venger, &c.

Act V. Sc. 3,

So much in general upon the genuine sentiments of passion. I proceed to particular observations. And, first, passions seldom continue uniform any considerable time ; they generally fluctuate, swelling and subsiding by turns, often in a quick succession ;\* and the sentiments cannot be just unless they correspond to such fluctuation. Accordingly, climax never shows better than in expressing a swelling passion : the following passages may suffice for an illustration.

*Oroonoko.*——Can you raise the dead ?  
Pursue and overtake the wings of time ?  
And bring about again, the hours, the days,  
The years that made me happy ?

*Oroonoko*, Act II. Sc. 2.

*Ameris.*——How hast thou charm'd  
The wildness of the waves and rocks to this ?  
That thus relenting they have giv'n thee back  
To earth, to light and life, to love and me ?

*Mourning Bride*, Act I. Sc. 7.

\* See chapter II. part iii.



I would not be the villain that thou think'st  
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,  
And the rich earth to boot.

*Macbeth*, Act IV. Sc. 4.

The following passage expresses finely the progress of conviction.

Let me not stir, nor breathe, lest I dissolve  
That tender, lovely form, of painted air,  
So like Almeria. Ha! it sinks, it falls;  
I'll catch it e'er it goes, and grasp her shade.  
'Tis life! 'tis warm! 'tis she! 'tis she herself!  
It is Almeria, 'tis, it is my wife!

*Mourning Bride*, Act II. Sc. 6.

In the progress of thought, our resolutions become more vigorous as well as our passions :

If ever I do yield or give consent,  
By an action, word, or thought, to wed  
Another lord ; may then just heav'n shew'r down, &c.

*Ibid.* Act I. Sc. 1.

And this leads to a second observation. That the different stages of a passion, and its different directions, from birth to extinction, must be carefully represented in their order ; because otherwise the sentiments, by being misplaced, will appear forced and unnatural. Resentment, for example, when provoked by an atrocious injury, discharges itself first upon the author : sentiments therefore of revenge come always first, and must in some measure be exhausted before the person injured think of grieving for himself. In the *Cid* of Corneille, Don Diegue having been affronted in a cruel manner, expresses scarce any sentiment of revenge, but is totally occupied in contemplating the low situation to which he is reduced by the affront :



O rage ! ô desespoir ! ô vieillesse ennemie !  
 N'ai je donc tant vécu que pour cette infamie ?  
 Et ne suis-je blanchi dans les travaux guerriers.  
 Que pour voir en un jour flétrir tant de lauriers ?  
 Mon bras, qu'avec respect toute l'Espagne admire,  
 Mon bras, qui tant de fois a suavé cet empire,  
 Tant de fois affermi le trône de son Roi,  
 Trahit donc ma querelle, et ne fait rien pour moi !  
 O cruel souvenir de ma gloire passée !  
 Oeuvre de tant de jours en un jour effacée !  
 Nouvelle dignité fatale à mon bonheur !  
 Precipice élevé dont tombe mon honneur !  
 Faut il de votre éclat voir triompher le Comte.  
 Et mourir sans vengeance, ou vivre dans la honte ?  
 Comte, sois de mon Prince à présent gouverneur,  
 Ce haut rang n'admet point un homme sans honneur ;  
 Et ton jaloux orgueil par cet affront insigne,  
 Malgré le choix du Roi, m'en a su rendre indigne.  
 Et toi, de mes exploits glorieux instrument,  
 Mais d'un corps tout de glace inutile ornement,  
 Fer jadis tant à craindre, et qui dans cette offense,  
 M'as servi de parade, et non pas de défense,  
 Va, quitte désormais le dernier des humains,  
 Passe pour me venger en de meilleures mains.

*Le Cid, Act I. Sc. 7.*

These sentiments are certainly not the first that are suggested by the passion of resentment. As the first movements of resentment are always directed to its object, the very same is the case of grief. Yet with relation to the sudden and severe distemper that seized Alexander bathing in the river Cydnus, Quintus Curtius describes the first emotions of the army as directed to themselves, lamenting that they were left without a leader, far from home, and had scarce any hopes of returning in safety : their King's distress, which must naturally have been their first concern, occupies them but in the second place, according to that author. In the *Aminta* of Tasso, Sylvia, upon a report of her lover's death, which she believed certain, instead of bemoaning the loss of her beloved, turns



her thoughts upon herself, and wonders her heart does not break :

Ohime, ben son di sasso,  
Poi che questa novella non m'uccide.

Act IV. Sc. 2.

In the tragedy of *Jane Shore*, Alicia, in the full purpose of destroying her rival, has the following reflection :

Oh jealousy! thou bane of pleasing friendship,  
Thou worst invader of our tender bosoms ;  
How does thy rancour poison all our softness,  
And turn our gentle natures into bitterness ?  
See where she comes! once my heart's dearest blessing,  
Now my changed eyes are blasted with her beauty,  
Loathe that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Act III. Sc. 1.

These are the reflections of a cool spectator. A passion while it has the ascendant, and is freely indulged, suggests not to the person who feels it any sentiment to its own prejudice : reflections like the foregoing occur not readily till the passion has spent its vigour.

A person sometimes is agitated at once by different passions ; and the mind, in that case, vibrating like a pendulum, vents itself in sentiments that partake of the same vibration. This I give as a third observation :

Queen. 'Would I had ne'er trod this English earth,  
Or felt the flatteries that grow upon it !  
Ye've angels' faces, but heaven knows your hearts.  
What shall become of me now ? wretched lady !  
I am the most unhappy woman living.  
Alas ! poor wenches, where are now your fortunes ?

To her women.

Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,  
No friends, no hope ! no kindred weep for me !  
Almost no grave allow'd me.

Henry VIII. Act III. Sc. 1.



*Othello.* Oh devil, devil!

If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,  
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.

Out of my sight!

*Desdemona.* I will not stay t' offend you.

(going

*Lodovico.* Truly, an obedient lady:

I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

*Oth.* Mistress——

*Des.* My Lord.

*Oth.* What would you with her, Sir?

*Lod.* Who, I, my Lord?

*Oth.* Ay; you did wish that I would make her turn:

Sir, she can turn and turn, and yet go on;

And turn again. And she can weep, Sir, weep:

And she's obedient: as you say, obedient;

Very obedient—proceed you in your tears—

Concerning this, Sir—oh well painted passion!

I am commanded home—get you away,

I'll send for you anon—Sir, I obey the mandate,

And will return to Venice.—Hence, avaunt!

[Exit Desdemona.

*Othello*, Act IV. Sc. 6.

*Emilia.* Oh! my good Lord, I would speak a word with you.

*Othello.* Yes, 'tis Emilia—By and by—She's dead.

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death:

The noise was high—Ha! no more moving?

Still as the grave. Shall she come in? were't good?

I think she stirs again—No—What's the best?

If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife;

My wife! my wife! What wife; I have no wife;

Oh insupportable! O heavy hour!

*Othello*, Act IV. Sc. 7.

A fourth observation is, That nature, which gave us passions, and made them extremely beneficial when moderate, intended undoubtedly that they should be subjected to the government of reason and conscience.\* It is therefore against the order of nature, that passion in any case should take the

\* See chapter II. part vii.



lead in contradiction to reason and conscience: such a state of mind is a sort of anarchy, which every one is ashamed of, and endeavours to hide or dissemble. Even love, however laudable, is attended with a conscious shame when it becomes immoderate: it is covered from the world, and disclosed only to the beloved object:

Et que l'amour souvent de rumors combattu  
Paroisse une foiblesse, et non une vertu.

*Boileau, L'art poet. Chant. iii. l. 101.*

O, they love least that let men know their love.

*Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act I. Sc. 3.*

Hence a capital rule in the representation of immoderate passions, that they ought to be hid or dissembled as much as possible. And this holds in an especial manner with respect to criminal passions: one never counsels the commission of a crime in plain terms: guilt must not appear in its native colours, even in thought: the proposal must be made by hints, and by representing the action in some favourable light. Of the propriety of sentiment upon such an occasion, Shakspeare, in the *Tempest*, has given us a beautiful example, in a speech by the usurping Duke of Milan, advising Sebastian to murder his brother the King of Naples:

*Antonia.*———What might,  
Worthy Sebastian—O, what might—no more.  
And yet, methinks, I see it in thy face,  
What thou shouldst be: th' occasion speaks thee, and  
My strong imagination sees a crown  
Dropping upon thy head.

*Act II. Sc. 1.*

There never was drawn a more complete picture of this kind, than that of King John soliciting Hubert to murder the young Prince Arthur:



*K. John.* Come hither, Hubert. O my gentle Hubert,  
We owe thee much; within this wall of flesh  
There is a soul counts thee her creditor,  
And with advantage means to pay thy love.  
And, my good friend, thy voluntary oath  
Lives in this bosom, dearly cherished.  
Give me thy hand, I had a thing to say——  
But I will fit it with some better time.  
By Heav'n, Hubert, I'm almost ashamed  
To say what good respect I have of thee.

*Hubert.* I am much bounden to your Majesty.

*K. John.* Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so yet—  
But thou shalt have—and creep time ne'er so slow,  
Yet it shall come for me to do thee good.  
I had a thing to say——~~but~~ let it go;  
The sun is in the heav'n; and the proud day,  
Attended with the pleasures of the world,  
Is all too wanton, and too full of gawds,  
To give me audience. If the midnight-bell  
Did with his iron tongue and brazen mouth  
Sound one in the drowy race of night;  
If this same were a church-yard where we stand,  
And thou possessed with a thousand wrongs;  
Or if that surly spirit Melancholy  
Had bak'd thy blood, and made it heavy-thick,  
Which else runs tickling up and down the veins,  
Making that Ideot Laughter keep men's eyes,  
And strain their cheeks to idle merriment,  
(A passion hateful to my purposes;)  
Or if that thou couldst see me without eyes,  
Hear me without thine ears, and make reply  
Without a tongue, using conceit alone,  
Without eyes, ears, and harmful sound of words;  
Then, in despite of broad-ey'd watchful day,  
I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts.  
But ah, I will not—Yet I love thee well;  
And by my troth, I think thou lov'st me well.

*Hubert.* So well, that what you bid me undertake,  
Though that my death were adjunct to my act,  
By Heav'n I'd do't.

*K. John.* Do not I know thou would'st?  
Good Hubert, Hubert, Hubert, throw thine eye  
On yon young boy. I'll tell thee what, my friend;  
He is a very serpent in my way,  
And wheresoe'er this foot of mine doth tread,



He lies before me. Dost thou understand me?  
Thou art his keeper.

*King John*, Act III. Sc. 5.

As things are best illustrated by their contraries, I proceed to faulty sentiments, disdaining to be indebted for examples to any but the most approved authors. The first class shall consist of sentiments that accord not with the passion; or, in other words, sentiments that the passion does not naturally suggest. In the second class, shall be ranged sentiments that may belong to an ordinary passion, but unsuitable to it as tinctured by a singular character. Thoughts that properly are not sentiments, but rather descriptions, make a third. Sentiments that belong to the passion represented, but are faulty as being introduced too early or too late, make a fourth. Vicious sentiments exposed in their native dress, instead of being concealed or disguised, make a fifth. And in the last class, shall be collected sentiments suited to no character nor passion, and therefore unnatural.

The first class contains faulty sentiments of various kinds, which I shall endeavour to distinguish from each other; beginning with sentiments that are faulty by being above the tone of the passion:

*Othello*.——— O my soul's joy!  
Waft every tempest come such calms,  
May the winds blow till they have waken'd death!  
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas  
Olympus high, and duck again as low  
As hell's from heaven.

*Othello*, Act II. Sc. 6.

This sentiment may be suggested by violent and inflamed passion, but is not suited to the calm satisfaction that one feels upon escaping danger.



*Philaster.* Place me, some god, upon a pyramid  
Higher than hills of earth, and lend a voice  
Loud as your thunder to me, that from thence  
I may discourse to all the under-world  
The worth that dwells in him.

*Philaster of Beaumont and Fletcher, Act IV.*

Second. Sentiments below the tone of the passion. Ptolemy, by putting Pompey to death, having incurred the displeasure of Cæsar, was in the utmost dread of being dethroned: in that agitating situation, Corneille makes him utter a speech full of cool reflection, that is in no degree expressive of the passion.

Ah! si je t'avois crû, je n'aurois pas de maître,  
Je serois dans le trône où le Ciel m'a fait naître;  
Mais c'est une imprudence assez commune aux rois,  
D'écouter trop d'avis, et se tromper aux choix.  
Le Destin les aveugle au bord du précipice,  
Où si quelque lumière en leur ame se glisse,  
Cette fausse clarté dont il les eblouit,  
Le plonge dans une gouffre, et puis s'évanouit.

*La mort de Pompey, Act IV. Sc. 1.*

In *Les Freres ennemies* of Racine, the second act is opened with a love-scene: Hemon talks to his mistress of the torments of absence, of the lustre of her eyes, that he ought to die no where but at her feet, and that one moment of absence is a thousand years. Antigone on her part acts the coquette: pretends she must be gone to wait on her mother and brother, and cannot stay to listen to his courtship. This is odious French gallantry, below the dignity of the passion of love: it would scarce be excusable in painting modern French manners; and is insufferable where the ancients are brought upon the stage. The manners painted in the *Alexandre* of the same author are not more just: French gallantry prevails there throughout.



In the same play, Almeria seeing a dead body, which she took to be Alphonso's, expresses sentiments strained and artificial, which nature suggests not to any person upon such an occasion :

Had they, or hearts, or eyes, that did this deed ?  
 Could eyes endure to guide such cruel hands ?  
 Are not my eyes guilty alike with theirs,  
 That thus can gaze, and yet not turn to stone ?  
 —I do not weep ! The springs of tears are dry'd,  
 And of a sudden I am calm, as if  
 All things were well ; and yet my husband's murder'd !  
 Yes, yes, I know to mourn : I'll sluice this heart,  
 The source of we, and let the torrent loose.

Act V. Sc. 11.

*Lady Trueman.* How could you be so cruel to defer giving me that joy which you knew I must receive from your presence ? You have robb'd my life of some hours of happiness that ought to have been in it.

*Drummer, Act V.*

Pope's *Elegy* to the memory of an unfortunate lady, expresses delicately the most tender concern and sorrow that one can feel for the deplorable fate of a person of worth. Such a poem, deeply serious and pathetic, rejects with disdain all fiction. Upon that account, the following passage deserves no quarter ; for it is not the language of the heart ; but of the imagination indulging its flights at ease ; and by that means is eminently discordant with the subject. It would be a still more severe censure, if it should be ascribed to imitation, copying indiscreetly what has been said by others :

What though no weeping loves thy ashes grace,  
 Nor polish'd marble emulate thy face ?  
 What though no sacred earth allow thee room,  
 Nor hollow'd dirge be mutter'd o'er thy tomb ?  
 Yet shall thy grave with rising flow'rs be drest,  
 And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast :



There shall the morn her earliest tears bestow,  
There the first roses of the year shall blow ;  
While angels with their silver wings o'ershade  
The ground, now sacred by thy reliques made.

Fifth. Fanciful or finical sentiments. Sentiments that degenerate into point or conceit, however they may amuse in an idle hour, can never be the offspring of any serious or important passion. In the *Jerusalem* of Tasso, Tancred, after a single combat, spent with fatigue and loss of blood, falls into a swoon ; in which situation, understood to be dead, he is discovered by Erminia, who was in love with him to distraction. A more happy situation cannot be imagined, to raise grief in an instant to its height ; and yet, in venting her sorrow, she descends most abominably into antithesis and conceit, even of the lowest kind :

E in lui versò d'inefficabil vena  
Lacrime, e voce di sospiri mista.  
In che misero punto hor qui me mena  
Fortuna ? a che veduta amara e trista ?  
Dopo gran tampe i' ti ritrivo à pena  
Tancredi, e ti riveggio, e non son vista,  
Vista non son da te, benchè presente  
E trovando ti perdo eternamente.

Canto xix. St. 105.

Armida's lamentation respecting her lover Rinaldo,\* is in the same vicious taste.

Queen. Give me no help in lamentation,  
I am not barren to bring forth complaints :  
All springs reduce their currents to mine eyes  
That I, being govern'd by the wat'ry moon,  
May send forth plenteous tears to drown the world,  
Ah, for my husband, for my dear Lord Edward.

King Richard III, Act II. Sc. 2

\* Canto xx. Stah. 124, 125, and 126.



*Jane Shore.* Let me be branded for the public scorn,  
Turn'd forth, and driven to wander like a vagabond,  
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread  
Upon the barren wild, and desolate waste,  
*Feed on my sighs and drink my falling tears ;*  
Ere I consent to teach my lips injustice,  
Or wrong the Orphan who has none to save him.

*Jane Shore, Act IV.*

Give me your drops, ye soft-descending rains,  
Give me your streams, ye never-ceasing springs,  
That my sad eyes may still supply my duty  
And feed an everlasting flood of sorrow.

*Jane Shore, Act V.*

Jane Shore utters her last breath in a witty conceit.

Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace—  
'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now—  
Was there not something I would have bequeath'd you ?  
But I have nothing left me to bestow,  
Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh mercy, Heav'n !

*Dies.*  
*Act V.*

Gilford to Lady Jane Gray, when both were condemned to die :

Thou stand'st unmov'd ;  
Calm temper sits upon thy beauteous brow :  
Thy eyes that flow'd so fast for Edward's loss,  
Gaze unconcern'd upon the ruin round thee,  
As if thou hadst resolv'd to brave thy fate,  
And triumph in the midst of desolation.  
Ha ! see, it swells, the liquid crystal rises,  
It starts in spight of thee—but I will catch it,  
Nor let the earth be wet with dew so rich.

*Lady Jane Gray, Act IV. near the end.*

The concluding sentiment is altogether finical, unsuitable to the importance of the occasion, and even to the dignity of the passion of love



Corneille, in his *Examen of the Cid*,\* answering an objection, That his sentiments are sometimes too much refined for persons in deep distress, observes, that if poets did not indulge sentiments more ingenious or refined than are prompted by passion, their performances would often be low, and extreme grief would never suggest but exclamations merely. This is in plain language to assert, that forced thoughts are more agreeable than those that are natural, and ought to be preferred.

The second class is of sentiments that may belong to an ordinary passion, but are not perfectly concordant with it, as tinged by a singular character.

In the last act of that excellent comedy, *The Careless Husband*, Lady Easy, upon Sir Charles's reformation, is made to express more violent and turbulent sentiments of joy, than are consistent with the mildness of her character :

*Lady Easy.*—O the soft treasure ! O the dear reward of long-desiring love.—Thus ! thus to have you mine, is something more than happiness ; 'tis double life, and madness of abounding joy.

If the sentiments of a passion ought to be suited to a peculiar character, it is still more necessary that actions be suited to the character. In the 5th act of the *Drummer*, Addison makes his gardener act even below the character of an ignorant credulous rustic : he gives him the behaviour of a gaping idiot.

The following instances are descriptions rather than sentiments, which compose a third class.

Of this descriptive manner of painting the passions, there is in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, Act



V. an illustrious instance, namely, the speech of Theseus, upon hearing of his son's dismal exit. In Racine's tragedy of *Esther*, the Queen hearing of the decree issued against her people, instead of expressing sentiments suitable to the occasion, turns her attention upon herself, and describes with accuracy her own situation :

Juste Ciel ! tout mon sang dans mes veines se glace.

Act I. Sc. 5.

Again,

*Aman*. C'en est fait. Mon orgueil est forcé de plier.  
L'inexorable Aman est réduit à prier.

*Esther*, Act III. Sc. 5.

*Athalie*. Quel prodige nouveau me trouble et m'embarrasse ?  
La douceur de sa voix, son enfance, sa grace,  
Font insensiblement à mon inimitié  
Succéder—Je serois sensible à la pitié ?

*Athalie*, Act II. Sc. 7.

*Titus*. O de ma passion fureur desespérée !

*Brutus of Voltaire*, Act III. Sc. 6.

What other are the foregoing instances but describing the passion another feels ?

A man stabbed to the heart in a combat with his enemy, expresses himself thus :

So, now I am at rest :—  
I feel death rising higher still, and higher,  
Within my bosom ; every breath I fetch  
Shuts up my life within a shorter compass :  
And like the vanishing sound of bells, grows less  
And less each pulse, till it be lost in air.

*Dryden*.

Captain Flash, in a farce composed by Garrick, endeavours to hide his fear by saying, "What a damn'd passion I am in."



An example is given above of remorse and despair expressed by genuine and natural sentiments. In the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*, Satan is made to express his remorse and despair in sentiments, which, though beautiful, are not altogether natural: they are rather the sentiments of a spectator, than of a person who actually is tormented with these passions.

The fourth class is of sentiments introduced too early or too late.

Some examples mentioned above belong to this class. Add the following from *Venice Preserved*, Act V. at the close of the scene between Belvidera and her father Priuli. The account given by Belvidera of the danger she was in, and of her husband's threatening to murder her, ought naturally to have alarmed her relenting father, and to have made him express the most perturbed sentiments. Instead of which he dissolves into tenderness and love for his daughter, as if he had already delivered her from danger, and as if there were a perfect tranquility:

Canst thou forgive me all my follies past?  
I'll henceforth be indeed a father; never  
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,  
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life,  
Dear as those eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee:  
Peace to thy heart.

Immoral sentiments exposed in their native colours, instead of being concealed or disguised, compose the fifth class.

The Lady Macbeth, projecting the death of the King, has the following soliloquy:

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\_\_\_\_\_The raven himself's not hoarse  
 That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan  
 Under my battlements. Come all you spirits  
 That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
 And fill me from the crown to th' toe, top-full  
 Of direst cruelty; make thick my blood,  
 Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,  
 That no compunctious visitings of nature  
 Shake my fell purpose.

*Macbeth, Act I. Sc. 7.*

This speech is not natural. A treacherous murder was never perpetrated even by the most hardened miscreant, without compunction: and that the lady here must have been in horrible agitation, appears from her invoking the infernal spirits to fill her with cruelty, and to stop up all avenues to remorse. But in that state of mind, it is a never-failing artifice of self-deceit, to draw the thickest veil over the wicked action, and to extenuate it by all the circumstances that imagination can suggest: and if the crime cannot bear disguise, the next attempt is to thrust it out of mind altogether, and to rush on to action without thought. This last was the husband's method:

Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;  
 Which must be acted ere they must be scann'd.

*Act III. Sc. 5:*

The lady follows neither of these courses, but in a deliberate manner endeavours to fortify her heart in the commission of an execrable crime, without even attempting to colour it. This I think is not natural; I hope there is no such wretch to be found as is here represented. In the *Pompey* of Corneille,\* Photine counsels a wicked action in the plainest terms without disguise:

\* Act 1. Sc. 1.



Seigneur, n'attirez point le tonnerre en ces lieux,  
 Rangez vous du parti des destins et des dieux,  
 Et sans les accuser d'injustice, au d'outrage ;  
 Puis qu'ils sont les heureux, adorez leur ouvrage ;  
 Quels que soient leurs decrets, déclarez-vous pour eux,  
 Et pour leur obéir, perdez le malheureux.  
 Press de toutes parts des colères celestes,  
 Il en vient dessus vous faire fondre les restes ;  
 Et sa tête qu' à peine il a pû dérober.  
 Tout prête dechoir, cherche avec qui tomber.  
 Sa retraite chez vous en effet n'est qu'un crime ;  
 Elle marque sa haine, et non pas son estime ;  
 Il ne vient que vous perdre en venant prendre port,  
 Et vous pouvez douter s'il est digne de mort !  
 Il devoit mieux remplir nos vœux et notre attente,  
 Faire voir sur ses nefs la victoire flotante ;  
 Il n'eût ici trouvé que joye et que festins ;  
 Mais puisqu'il est vaincu, qu'il s'en prenne aux destins.  
 J'en veux à sa disgrâce et non à sa personne,  
 J' exécute à regret ce que le ciel ordonne,  
 Et du même poignard, pour César destiné,  
 Je perce en soupirant son cœur infortuné,  
 Vous ne pouvez enfin qu' aux dépens de sa tête  
 Mettre à l'abri la vôtre, et parer la tempête.  
 Laissez nommer sa morte un injuste attentat,  
 La justice n'est pas une vertu d'état.  
 Le choix des actions, ou mauvaises, ou bonnes,  
 Ne fait qu' anéantir la force des couronnes ;  
 Le droit des rois consiste à ne rein épargner ;  
 La timide équité détruit l'art de regner ;  
 Quand on craint d'être injuste on a toûjour à craindre ;  
 Et qui veut tout pouvoir doit oser tout enfreindre.  
 Fuir comme un deshonneur la vertu qui le pert,  
 Et voler sans scrupule au crime qui lui sert.

In the tragedy of *Esther*,\* Haman acknowledges,  
 without disguise, his cruelty, insolence, and pride.  
 And there is another example of the same kind in  
 the *Agamemnon* of Seneca.† In the tragedy of  
*Athalie*,‡ Mathan, in cool blood, relates to his friend

\* Act II. Sc. 1.

† Beginning of Act II.

‡ Act III. Sc. 3. at the close.



many black crimes he had been guilty of, to satisfy his ambition.

In Congreve's *Double-dealer*, Maskwell, instead of disguising or colouring his crimes, values himself upon them in a soliloquy :

Cynthia, let thy beauty gild my crimes; and whatsoever I commit of treachery or deceit, shall be imputed to me as a merit. ——— Treachery ! what treachery ? Love cancels all the bonds of friendship, and sets men right upon their first foundations.

In French plays, love, instead of being hid or disguised, is treated as a serious concern, and of greater importance than fortune, family or dignity. I suspect the reason to be, that, in the capital of France, love, by the easiness of intercourse, has dwindled down from a real passion to be a connexion that is regulated entirely by the mode or fashion.\* This may in some measure excuse their writers, but will never make their plays be relished among foreigners :

*Maxime.* Quoi, trahir mon ami ?

*Euphorbe.* ——— L'amour rend tout permis,  
Un véritable amant ne connoît point d'amis.

*Cinna*, Act III. Sc. 1.

*Cesar.* Reine, tout est plaisible, et la ville calmée,  
Qu'un trouble assez léger avoit trop alarmée,  
N'a plus à redouter le divorce intestin  
Du soldat insolent, et du peuple mutin.  
Mais, ô Dieux ! ce moment que je vous ai quittee,

\* A certain author says humorously, " Les mots mêmes d'amour et d'amant " sont bannis de l'intime société des deux sexes, et relegués avec ceux de *chaine* et de *flame* dans les Romans qu'on ne lit plus." And where nature is once banished, a fair field is open to every fantastic imitation, even the most extravagant.



D'un trouble bien plus grand à mon ame agitée,  
 Et ces soins importuns qui m'arrachioient de vous  
 Contre ma grandeur même allumoient mon courroux.  
 Je lui voulois du mal de m'être si contraire,  
 De rendre ma présence ailleurs si nécessaire.  
 Mais je lui pardonnois au simple souvenir  
 Du bonheur qu'à ma flâme elle fait obtenir.  
 C'est elle dont je tiens cette haute espérance,  
 Qui sate mes desirs d'une illustre apparence,  
 Et fait croire à César qu'il peut former de vœux,  
 Qu'il n'est pas tout-à-fait indigne de vos feux,  
 Et qu'il peut en pretendre une juste conquête,  
 N'ayant plus que les Dieux au dessus de sa tête.  
 Oui, Reine, si quelq' un dans ce vaste univers  
 Pouvoit porter plus haut la gloire de vos fers ;  
 S'il étoit quelque trône où vous pouissiez paroître  
 Plus dignement assise en captivant son maître,  
 J'irois, j'irois à lui, moins pour le lui ravir,  
 Que pour lui disputer le droit de vous servir ;  
 Et je n'aspirerois au bonheur de vous plaire.  
 Qu'après avoir mis bas un si grand adversaire.  
 C'étoit pour acquérir un droit si précieux,  
 Que combattoit par tout mon bras ambitieux,  
 Et dans Pharsale même il a tiré l'épee  
 Plus pour le conserver, que pour vaincre Pompe.  
 Je l'ai vaincu, Princesse, et le Dieu de combats  
 M'y favorisoit moins que vos divins appas.  
 Ils conduisoient ma main, ils enflamoient mon courage,  
 Cette pleine victoire est leur dernier ouvrage,  
 C'est l'effect des ardeurs qu'ils daignoient m'inspirer ;  
 Et vos beaux yeux enfin m'ayant fait soupirer,  
 Pour faire que votre ame avec gloire y réponde,  
 M'ont rendu le premier, et de Rome, et du monde ;  
 C'est ce glorieux titre, à présent effectif,  
 Que je viens ennoblir par celui de captif ;  
 Heureux, si mon esprit gagne tant sur le vôtre,  
 Qu'il en estime l'un, et me permette l'autre.

*Pompee, Act IV. Sc. 3.*

The last class comprehends sentiments that are  
 unnatural, as being suited to no character nor pas-  
 sion. These may be subdivided into three branches :  
 first, sentiments unsuitable to the constitution of  
 man, and to the laws of his nature ; second, in-



consistent sentiments; third, sentiments that are pure rant and extravagance.

When the fable is of human affairs, every event, every incident, and every circumstance, ought to be natural, otherwise the imitation is imperfect. But an imperfect imitation is a venial fault, compared with that of running cross to nature. In the *Hippolytus* of Euripides,\* Hippolytus, wishing for another self in his own situation, How much (says he) should I be touched with his misfortune! as if it were natural to grieve more for the misfortunes of another than for one's own.

*Osmyn.* Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.  
Turn your lights inward, Eyes, and view my thought.  
So shall you still behold her—'twill not be.  
O impotence of sight! mechanic sense  
Which to exterior objects ow'st thy faculty,  
Not seeing of election, but necessity.  
Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,  
Successively reflect succeeding images.  
Nor what they would, but must; a star or toad;  
Just as the hand of chance administers!

*Mourning Bride, Act II. Sc. 3.*

No man in his senses, ever thought of applying his eyes to discover what passes in his mind; far less of blaming his eyes for not seeing a thought or idea. In Moliere's *L'Avare*,† Harpagon being robbed of his money, seizes himself by the arm, mistaking it for that of the robber. And again he expresses himself as follows:

Je veux aller querir la justice, et faire donner la question à toute ma maison; à servantes, à valets, à fils, à fille, et à moi aussi.

\* Act iv. Sc. 5.

† Act iv. Sc. 7.



Of this second branch the following are examples.

—————Now bid me run,  
And I will strive with things impossible,  
Yea get the better of them.

*Julius Cesar, Act II. Sc. 3.*

Vos mains seule sont droit de vaincre un invincible.

*Le Cid, Act V. Sc. last.*

Que son nom soit beni. Que son nom soit chanté,  
Que l'on celebre ses ouvrages  
Au delà de l'éternité.

*Esther, Act V. Sc. last.*

Me miserable ! which way shall I fly  
Infinite wrath and infinite despair ?  
Which way I fly is hell : myself am hell ;  
And in the *lowest* deep, a *lower* deep  
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide ;  
To which the hell I suffer seems a heav'n.

*Paradise Lost, Book IV.*

Of the third branch, take the following samples.  
Lucan talking of Pompey's sepulchre,

—————Romanum nomen, et omne  
Imperium Magno est tumuli modus. Obrue saxa  
Crimine plena deum. Si tota est Herculis Oete,  
Et juga tota vacant Bromio Nyseia ; quare  
Unus in Egypto Magno lapis ? Omnia Lagi  
Rura tenere potest, si nullo cespite nomen  
Hæserit. Erremus populi, cinerumque tuorum,  
Magne, metu nullas Nili calcemus arenas. *L. viii. l. 798.*

Thus in Row's translation :

Where there are seas, or air, or earth, or skies,  
Where-e'r Rome's empire stretches, Pompey lies.  
Far be the vile memorial then convey'd !  
Nor let this stone the partial gods upbraid.  
Shall Hercules all Oeta's heights demand,  
And Nysa's hill for Bacchus only stand ;



While one poor pebble is the warrior's doom  
 That fought the cause of liberty and Rome?  
 If Fate decrees he must in Egypt lie,  
 Let the whole Fertile realm his grave supply,  
 Yield the wide country to his awful shade  
 Nor let us dare on any part to tread,  
 Fearful we violate the mighty dead.

The following passages are pure rant. Coriolanus, speaking to his mother,

What is this?  
 Your knees to me? to your corrected son?  
 Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach  
 Fill up the stars: then let the mutinous winds  
 Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun:  
 Murd'ring impossibility, to make  
 What cannot be, slight work.

*Coriolanus.* Act V. Sc. 3.

*Cæsar.* ——— Danger knows full well,  
 That Cæsar is more dangerous than he.  
 We were two lions litter'd in one day,  
 And I the elder and more terrible.

*Julius Cæsar,* Act II. Sc. 4.

*Almahide.* This day———  
 I gave my faith to him, he his to me.  
*Almanzor.* Good Heav'n, thy book of fate before me lay  
 But to tear out the journal of this day.  
 Or if the order of the world below,  
 Will not the gap of one whole day allow,  
 Give me that minute when she made that vow,  
 That minute ev'n the happy from their bliss might give,  
 And those who live in grief a shorter time would live,  
 So small a link if broke, the eternal chain,  
 Would like divided waters join again.

*Conquest of Grenada,* Act III.

*Almanzar.* ——— I'll hold it fast  
 As life: and when life's gone, I'll hold this last,  
 And if thou tak'st after I am slain,  
 I'll send my ghost to fetch it back again.

*Conquest of Grenada,* Part II. Act 3.



*Lyndiraza.* A crown is come, and will not fate allow,  
And yet I feel something like death is near.

My guards, my guards ———

Let not that ugly skeleton appear.

Sure Destiny mistakes ; this death's not mine ;

She doats, and means to cut another line.

Tell her I am a queen—but 'tis too late ;

Dying, I charge rebellion on my fate ;

Bow down, ye slaves ———

Bow quickly down, and your submission show ;

I'm pleas'd to taste an empire ere I go.

[Dies.

*Conquest of Grenada, Part II. Act V.*

*Ventidius.* But you, ere love misled your wand'ring eyes,  
Were, sure, the chief and best of human race,  
Fram'd in the very pride and boast of nature,  
So perfect, that the gods who form'd you wonder'd  
At their own skill, and cry'd, A lucky hit  
Has mended our design.

*Dryden, All for Love, Act I.*

Not to talk of the impiety of this sentiment, it is  
ludicrous instead of being lofty.

The famous epitaph on Raphael is no less absurd  
than any of the foregoing passages :

Raphael, timuit, quo sospite, vinci  
Rerum magna parens, et moriente mori.

Imitated by Pope in his Epitaph on Sir Godfrey  
Kneller :

Living, great Nature fear'd he might outvie  
Her works ; and dying, fears herself might die.

Such is the force of imitation ; for Pope of himself  
would never have been guilty of a thought so  
extravagant.

So much upon sentiments ; the language proper  
for expressing them, comes next in order.



## CHAPTER XVII.

*Language of Passion.*

AMONG the particulars that compose the social part of our nature, a propensity to communicate our opinions, our emotions, and every thing that affects us, is remarkable. Bad fortune and injustice affect us greatly; and of these we are so prone to complain, that if we have no friend nor acquaintance to take part in our sufferings, we sometimes utter our complaints aloud, even where there are none to listen.

But this propensity operates not in every state of mind. A man immoderately grieved, seeks to afflict himself, rejecting all consolation: immoderate grief accordingly is mute: complaining is struggling for consolation.

It is the wretch's comfort still to have  
Some small reserve of near and inward woe,  
Some unsuspected hoard of inward grief,  
Which they unseen may wail, and weep, and mourn,  
And glutton-like alone devour.

*Mourning Bride*, Act I. Sc. 1.

When grief subsides, it then and no sooner, finds a tongue: we complain, because complaining is an effort to disburden the mind of its distress.\*

\* This observation is finely illustrated by a story which Heroditus records, b. iii. Cambyzes, when he conquered Egypt, made Psammenitus the king prisoner; and for trying his constancy, ordered his daughter to be dressed in the habit of a slave, and to be employed in bringing water from the river; his son also was led to execution with a halter about his neck. The Egyptians vented their sorrow in tears and lamentations; Psammenitus only,



Surprise and terror are silent passions for a different reason: they agitate the mind so violently as for a time to suspend the exercise of its faculties, and among others the faculty of speech.

Love and revenge, when immoderate, are not more loquacious than immoderate grief. But when these passions become moderate, they set the tongue free, and, like moderate grief, become loquacious; moderate love, when unsuccessful, is vented in complaints; when successful, is full of joy expressed by words and gestures.

As no passion hath any long uninterrupted existence,\* nor beats away with an equal pulse, the language suggested by passion is not only unequal, but frequently interrupted: and even during an uninterrupted fit of passion, we only express in words the more capital sentiments. In familiar conversation, one who vents every single thought is justly branded with the character of *loquacity*; because sensible people express no thoughts but what make some figure: in the same manner, we are only disposed to express the strongest pulses of passion, especially when it returns with impetuosity after interruption.

I formerly had occasion to observe,† that the sentiments ought to be tuned to the passion, and the

with a downcast eye, remained silent. Afterward meeting one of his companions, a man advanced in years, who, being plundered of all, was begging alms, he wept bitterly, calling him by his name. Cambyzes, struck with wonder, demanded an answer to the following question: "Psammenitus, thy master, Cambyzes, is desirous to know, why, after thou hadst seen thy daughter so ignominiously treated, and thy son led to execution, without exclaiming or weeping, thou shouldst be so highly concerned for a poor man, no way related to thee?" Psammenitus returned the following answer: "Son of Cyrus, the calamities of my family are too great to leave me the power of weeping; but the misfortunes of a companion, reduced in his old age to want of bread, is a fit subject for lamentation."

\* See Chapter II. Part lii.

† Chapter XVI.



language to both. Elevated sentiments require elevated language: tender sentiments ought to be clothed in words that are soft and flowing: when the mind is depressed with any passion, the sentiments must be expressed in words that are humble, not low. Words being intimately connected with the ideas they represent, the greatest harmony is required between them: to express, for example, an humble sentiment in high sounding words, is disagreeable by a discordant mixture of feelings; and the discord is not less when elevated sentiments are dressed in low words:

Versibus exponi tragicis res comica non vult.  
Indignatur item privatis ac prope socco  
Dignis carminibus narrari coena Thyestæ.

*Horace, Ars poet. l. 89.*

This, however, excludes not figurative expression, which, within moderate bounds, communicates to the sentiment an agreeable elevation. We are sensible of an effect directly opposite, where figurative expression is indulged beyond a just measure: the opposition between the expression and the sentiment, makes the discord appear greater than it is in reality.\*

At the same time, figures are not equally the language of every passion: pleasant emotions, which elevate or swell the mind, vent themselves in strong epithets and figurative expression; but humbling and dispiriting passions affect to speak plain:

Et tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri  
Telephus et Peleus: cum pauper et exul uterque;  
Projicit ampulla et sesquipedalia verba,  
Si curat cor spectantis tetigisse querela.

*Horace, Ars poet. l. 93.*

\* See this explained more particularly in chapter VIII. :



Figurative expression, being the work of an enlivened imagination, cannot be the language of anguish or distress. Otway, sensible of this, has painted a scene of distress in colours finely adapted to the subject : there is scarce a figure in it, except a short and natural simile with which the speech is introduced. Belvidera talking to her father of her husband :

Think you saw what pass'd at our last parting ;  
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,  
Pacing the earth, and tearing up his steps,  
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain  
Of burning fury ; think you saw his one hand  
Fix'd on my throat, while the extended other  
Grasp'd a keen threat'ning dagger ; oh, 'twas thus  
We last embrac'd, when, trembling with revenge,  
He dragg'd me to the ground, and at my bosom  
Presented horrid death : cry'd out, My friends !  
Where are my friends ? swore, wept, rag'd, threaten'd, lov'd ;  
For he yet lov'd, and that dear love preserv'd me  
To this last trial of a father's pity.  
I fear not death, but cannot bear a thought  
That that dear hand should do the unfriendly office ;  
If I was ever then your care, now hear me ;  
Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives  
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

*Venice Preserved, Act V.*

To preserve the aforesaid resemblance between words and their meaning, the sentiments of active and hurrying passions ought to be dressed in words where syllables prevail that are pronounced short or fast ; for these make an impression of hurry and precipitation. Emotions on the other hand, that rest upon their objects, are best expressed by words where syllables prevail that are pronounced long or slow. A person affected with melancholy has a languid and slow train of perceptions : the expression best suited to that state of mind, is where words, not only of long but of many syllables,



abound in the composition; and, for that reason, nothing can be finer than the following passage.

In those deep solitudes, and awful cells,  
Where heav'nly pensive Contemplation dwells,  
And ever-musing melancholy reigns.

*Pope, Eloisa to Abeldard.*

To preserve the same resemblance, another circumstance is requisite, that the language, like the emotion, be rough or smooth, broken or uniform. Calm and sweet emotions are best expressed by words that glide softly: surprise, fear, and other turbulent passions, require an expression both rough and broken.

It cannot have escaped any diligent inquirer into nature, that, in the hurry of passion, one generally expresses that thing first which is most at heart: \* which is beautifully done in the following passage.

Me, me, adsum qui feci: in me convertite ferrum,  
O Rutula, mea fraus omnis.

*Æneid, ix. 427.*

Passion has often the effect of redoubling words, the better to make them express the strong conception of the mind. This is finely imitated in the following examples.

—————Thou sun, said I, fair light!  
And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay!  
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains!  
And ye that live, and move, fair creatures! tell,  
Tell if ye saw, how came I thus, how here————

*Paradise Lost, Book viii. 27.*

\* Demetrius Phalereus (of Elocution, sect. 28.) justly observes, that an accurate adjustment of the words to the thought, so as to make them correspond in every particular, is only proper for sedate subjects; for that passion speaks plain, and rejects all refinements.



———Both have sinn'd! but thou  
Against God only; I, 'gainst God and thee:  
And to the place of judgment will return.  
There with my cries importune heaven, that all  
The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light  
On me, sole cause to thee of all this wo;  
Me! Me! only just object of his ire.

*Paradise Lost, Book x. 986.*

Shakspeare is superior to all other writers in delineating passion. It is difficult to say in what part he most excels, whether in moulding every passion to peculiarity of character, in discovering the sentiments that proceed from various tones of passion, or in expressing properly every different sentiment: he disgusts not his reader with general declamation and unmeaning words, too common in other writers: his sentiments are adjusted to the peculiar character and circumstances of the speaker: and the propriety is no less perfect between his sentiments and his diction. That this is no exaggeration, will be evident to every one of taste, upon comparing Shakspeare with other writers in similar passages. If upon any occasion he fall below himself, it is in those scenes where passion enters not: by endeavouring in that case to raise his dialogue above the style of ordinary conversation, he sometimes deviates into intricate thought and obscure expression: \* sometimes, to throw his lan-

\* Of this take the following specimen:

They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
Soil our ambition; and, indeed it takes  
From our achievements, though performed at height,  
The pitch and marrow of our attribute.  
So, oft it chanceth in particular men,  
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty;  
Since nature cannot choose his origin,)  
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;



guage out of the familiar, he employs rhyme. But may it not in some measure excuse Shakspeare, I shall not say his works, that he had no pattern, in his own or in any living language, of dialogue fitted for the theatre? At the same time it ought not to escape observation, that the stream clears in its progress, and that in his later plays he has attained the purity and perfection of dialogue: an observation that, with greater certainty than tradition, will direct us to arrange his plays in the order of time. This ought to be considered by those who rigidly exaggerate every blemish of the finest genius for the drama ever the world enjoyed: they ought also for their own sake to consider, that it is easier to discover his blemishes, which lie generally at the surface, than his beauties, which cannot be truly relished but by those who dive deep into human nature. One thing must be evident to the meanest capacity, that wherever passion is to be displayed, Nature shows itself mighty in him, and is conspicuous by the most delicate propriety of sentiment and expression.\*

Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens  
 The form of plausible manners; that these men  
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
 (Being Nature's livery, or Fortune's scar,)  
 Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,  
 As infinite as man may undergo,  
 Shall in the general censure take corruption  
 For that particular fault.

*Hamlet, Act I. Sc. 7.*

\* The critics seem not perfectly to comprehend the genius of Shakspeare. His plays are defective in the mechanical part; which is less the work of genius than of experience, and is not otherwise brought to perfection but by diligently observing the errors of former compositions. Shakspeare excels all the ancients and moderns in knowledge of human nature, and in unfolding even the most obscure and refined emotions. This is a rare faculty, and of the greatest importance in a dramatic author; and it is that faculty which makes him surpass all other writers in the comic as well as tragic vein.



I return to my subject from a digression I cannot repent of. That perfect harmony which ought to subsist among all the constituent parts of a dialogue, is a beauty, no less rare than conspicuous: as to expression in particular, were I to give instances, where, in one or other of the respects above mentioned, it corresponds not precisely to the characters, passions, and sentiments, I might from different authors collect volumes. Following therefore the method laid down in the chapter of sentiments, I shall confine my quotations to the grosser errors, which every writer ought to avoid.

And, first, of passion expressed in words flowing in an equal course without interruption.

In the chapter above cited, Corneille is censured for the impropriety of his sentiments; and here, for the sake of truth, I am obliged to attack him a second time. Were I to give instances from that author of the fault under consideration, I might transcribe whole tragedies; for he is no less faulty in this particular, than in passing upon us his own thoughts as a spectator, instead of the genuine sentiments of passion. Nor would a comparison between him and Shakspeare, upon the present article, redound more to his honour, than the former upon the sentiments. Racine is here less incorrect than Corneille; and from him therefore I shall gather a few instances. The first shall be the description of the sea-monster in his *Phædra*, given by Theramene, the companion of Hippolytus. Theramene is represented in terrible agitation, which appears from the following passage, so boldly figurative as not to be excused but by violent perturbation of mind:

Le ciel avec horreur voit ce monstre sauvage,  
Le terre, s'en émeut, l'air en est infecté,  
Le flot, qui l'apporta, recule épouvanté.



Yet Theramene gives a long pompous connected description of that event, dwelling upon every minute circumstance, as if he had been only a cool spectator :

A peine nous sortions des portes de Tiézène,  
Il étoit sur son char. Ses gardes affligés  
Imitoient son silence, autour de lui rangés.  
Il suivoit tout pensif le chemin de Mycènes.  
Sa main sur les chevaux laissoit flotter les rênes.  
Ses superbs coursiers qu'on voyoit autrefois  
Pleins d'une ardeur si noble obéir à sa voix,  
L'œil morne maintenant et la tête baissée,  
Sembloient se conformer à sa triste pensée, &c.

Act V. Sc. 6.

The last speech of Atalide, in the tragedy of *Bajazet*, of the same author, is a continued discourse; and but a faint representation of the violent passion which forced her to put an end to her own life :

Enfin d'en est donc fait. Et par mes artifices,  
Mes injustes soupçons, mes funestes caprices,  
Je suis donc arrivée au douloureux moment,  
Où je vois, par mon crime, expirer mon amant.  
N'étoit-ce pas assez, cruelle destinée,  
Qu'à lui survivre, hélas ! je fusse condamnée ?  
Et falloit il encore que, peut-être d'horreurs,  
Je ne pusse imputer sa mort qu'à mes fureurs !  
Où, c'est moi, cher amant, qui t'arrache la vie ;  
Roxane, ou le Sultan, ne te l'ont ravie.  
Moi seule, j'ai tissé le lien malheureux  
Dont tu viens d'éprouver les detestables nœuds.  
Et je puis, sans mourir, en souffrir la pensée ?  
Moi, qui n'ai pu tantôt, de ta mort menacée,  
Retenir mes esprits, prompts à m'abandonner !  
Ah ! n'ai-je eu de l'amour que pour t'assassiner ?  
Mais c'en est trop. Il faut pour un prompt sacrifice,  
Que ma fidelle main te venge, et me punisse.  
Vous, de qui j'ai troublé la gloire et le repos,  
Héros, qui deviez tous revivre en ce héros,  
Toi, mère malheureuse, et qui dès notre enfance,  
Me confias son cœur dans une autre espérance,



Malheureux Visir, amis désespérés,  
 Roxane, venez tous contre moi conjurez,  
 Tourmenter à la fois une amante éperdue ; [Elle se tue.  
 Et prenez la vengeance enfin qui vous est due.

Act V. Sc. last.

Though works, not authors, are the professed subject of this critical undertaking, I am tempted by the present speculation to transgress once again the limits prescribed, and to venture a cursory reflection upon that justly celebrated author, That he is always sensible, generally correct, never falls low, maintains a moderate degree of dignity, without reaching the sublime, paints delicately the tender affections, but is a stranger to the genuine language of enthusiastic or fervid passion.

If, in general, the language of violent passion ought to be broken and interrupted, soliloquies ought to be so in a peculiar manner ; language is intended by nature for society ; and a man when alone, though he always clothes his thoughts in words, seldom gives his words utterance, unless when prompted by some strong emotion ; and even then by starts and intervals only.\* Shakspeare's soliloquies may justly be established as a model ; for it is not easy to conceive any model more perfect : of his many incomparable soliloquies, I confine myself to the two following, being different in their manner.

*Hamlet.* Oh, that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
 Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew !  
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! O God !  
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
 Seem to me all the uses of this world !  
 Fie on't ! O fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
 That grows to seed : things rank and gross in nature

\* Soliloquies accounted for, chapter XV.



Possess it merely.—That it should come to this!  
 But two months dead! nay, not so much; not two;—  
 So excellent a king, that was, to this,  
 Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,  
 That he permitted not the winds of heav'n  
 Visit her face too roughly. Heav'n and earth!  
 Must I remember—why, she would hang on him,  
 As if increase of appetite had grown  
 By what it fed on: yet, within a month—  
 Let me not think—Frailty, thy name is *Woman*!  
 A little month! or ere those shoes were old,  
 With which she followed my poor father's body,  
 Like Niobe, all tears—Why she, ev'n she—  
 (O heav'n! a beast that wants discourse of reason,  
 Would have mourn'd longer—) married with mine uncle,  
 My father's brother; but no more like my father,  
 Than I to Hercules. Within a month!  
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
 Had left the flushing in her gauled eyes,  
 She married—Oh, most wicked speed, to post  
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!  
 It is not, nor it cannot come to good.  
 But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

*Hamlet, Act I. Sc. 3.*

*Ford.* Hum! ha! is this a vision? is this a dream? do I sleep?  
 Mr. Ford, awake; awake, Mr. Ford; there's a hole made in your  
 best coat, Mr. Ford! this 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have li-  
 nen and buck-baskets! Well, I will proclaim myself what I am;  
 I will now take the leacher; he is at my house; he cannot scape  
 me: 'tis impossible he should; he cannot creep into a halfpenny  
 purse, nor into a pepper-box. But lest the devil that guides him  
 should aid him, I will search impossible places, though what I  
 cannot avoid, yet to be what I would not, shall not make me  
 tame.

*Merry Wives of Windsor, Act III. Sc. last.*

These soliloquies are accurate and bold copies  
 of nature: in a passionate soliloquy one begins  
 with thinking aloud; and the strongest feelings  
 only, are expressed; as the speaker warms, he be-  
 gins to imagine one listening, and gradually slides  
 into a connected discourse.



How far distant are soliloquies generally from these models? So far, indeed, as to give disgust instead of pleasure. The first scene of *Iphigenia* in Tauris discovers that Princess, in a soliloquy, gravely reporting to herself her own history. There is the same impropriety in the first scene of *Alcestes*, and in the other introductions of Euripide, almost without exception. Nothing can be more ridiculous: it puts one in mind of a most curious device in Gothic paintings, that of making every figure explain itself by a written label issuing from its mouth. The description which a parasite, in the *Eunuch* of Terence,\* gives of himself, makes a sprightly soliloquy; but it is not consistent with the rules of propriety; for no man in his ordinary state of mind, and upon a familiar subject, ever thinks of talking aloud to himself. The same objection lies against a soliloquy in the *Adelphi* of the same author.† The soliloquy which makes the third scene, act third, of his *Heicyra*, is insufferable; for there Pamphilus, soberly and circumstantially, relates to himself an adventure which had happened to him a moment before.

Corneille is not more happy in his soliloquies than in his dialogues. Take for a specimen the first scene of *Cinna*.

Racine also is extremely faulty in the same respect. His soliloquies are regular harrangues, a chain completed in every link, without interruption or interval: that of Antiochus in *Berenice*‡ resembles a regular pleading, where the parties *pro* and *con* display their arguments at full length. The following soliloquies are equally faulty: *Bajazet*, act iii. sc. 7.; *Mithridate*, act iii. sc. 4. and act iv. sc. 5.; *Iphigenia*, act 4 sc. 8.

\* Act II. Sc. 2.

† Act I. Sc. 1.

‡ Act I. Sc. 2.



Soliloquies upon lively or interesting subjects, but without any turbulence of passion, may be carried on in a continued chain of thought. If, for example, the nature and sprightliness of the subject prompt a man to speak his thoughts in the form of a dialogue, the expression must be carried on without break or interruption, as in a dialogue between two persons; which justifies Falstaff's soliloquy upon honour:

What need I be so forward with Death, that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter, Honour pricks me on. But how if Honour prick me off, when I come on? how then? Can Honour set a leg? No: or an arm? No: or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery then? No. What is honour? a word.—What is that word *honour*? Air; a trim reckoning.—Who hath it? He that dy'd a Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. Is it insensible then? Yes, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it; honour is a mere scutcheon; and so ends my catechism.

*First Part, Henry IV. Act V. Sc. 2.*

And even without dialogue, a continued discourse may be justified, where a man reasons in a soliloquy upon an important subject; for if in such a case it be at all excusable to think aloud, it is necessary that the reasoning be carried on in a chain; which justifies that admirable soliloquy in *Hamlet* upon life and immortality, being a serene meditation upon the most interesting of all subjects. And the same consideration will justify the soliloquy that introduces the 5th act of Addison's *Cato*.

The next class of the grosser errors which all writers ought to avoid, shall be of language elevated above the tone of the sentiment; of which take the following instances:



*Zara.* Swift as occasion, I  
 Myself will fly; and earlier than the morn  
 Wake thee to freedom. Now 'tis late; and yet  
 Some news few minutes past arriv'd, which seem'd  
 To shake the temper of the King.—Who knows  
 What racking cares disease a monarch's bed?  
 Or love, that late at night still lights his lamp,  
 And strikes his rays through dusk, and folded lids,  
 Forbidding rest, may stretch his eyes awake,  
 And force their balls abroad at this dead hour.  
 I'll try.

*Mourning Bride, Act III. Sc. 4.*

The language here is undoubtedly too pompous and laboured for describing so simple a circumstance as absence of sleep. In the following passage, the tone of the language, warm and plaintive, is well suited to the passion, which is recent grief: but every one will be sensible, that in the last couplet save one, the tone is changed, and the mind suddenly elevated to be let fall as suddenly in the last couplet:

Il détest à jamais sa coupable victoire,  
 Il renonce à la cour, aux humains, à la gloire;  
 Et se fuit lui-même, au milieu des deserts,  
 Il va cacher sa peine aut bout de l'univers;  
*La, soit que le soleil rendit le jour au monde,*  
*Soit qu'il finit sa course au vaste sein de l'onde,*  
 Sa voix faisoit redire aux echos attendris,  
 Le nom, le triste nom, de son malheureux fils.

*Henriade, chant. viii. 229.*

Language too artificial or too figurative for the gravity, dignity, or importance, of the occasion, may be put in a third class.

Chimene demanding justice against Rodrigue who killed her father, instead of a plain and pathetic expostulation, makes a speech stuffed with the most artificial flowers of rhetoric:



Sire, mon pere est mort, mes yeux ont vû son sang  
 Couler à gros bouillons de son généreux flanc ;  
 Ce sang qui tant de fois garantit vos murailles,  
 Ce sang qui tant de fois vous gagna des batailles,  
 Ce sang qui, tout sorti, fume encore de courroux  
 De se voir répandu pour d'autres que pour vous,  
 Qu'au milieu des hazards n'osoit verser la guerre,  
 Rodrigue en votre cour vient d'en couvrir la terre.  
 J'ai couru sur le lieu sans force, et sans couleur :  
 Je l'ai trouvé sans vie. Excusez ma douleur,  
 Sire ; la voix me manque à ce recit funeste,  
 Mes pleurs et mes soupirs vous diront mieux le reste.

And again,

Son flanc étoit ouvert, et, pour mieux m'emouvoir,  
 Son sang sur la poussiere écrivoit mon devoir ;  
 Ou plutôt sa valeur en cet état réduite,  
 Me parloit par sa plaie, et hâtoit ma poursuite,  
 Et pour se faire entendre au plus juste des Rois,  
 Par cette triste bouche elle empruntoit ma voix.

Act II. Sc. 9.

Nothing can be contrived in language more averse to the tone of the passion than this florid speech : I should imagine it more apt to provoke laughter than to inspire concern or pity.

In a fourth class shall be given specimens of language too light or airy for a severe passion.

Imagery and figurative expression are discordant, in the highest degree, with the agony of a mother, who is deprived of two hopeful sons by a brutal murder. Therefore the following passage is undoubtedly in a bad taste.

*Queen.* Ah, my poor princes ! ah, my tender babes !  
 My unblown flow'rs, new appearing sweets !  
 If yet your gentle souls fly in the air  
 And be not fixt in doom perpetual,  
 Hover about me with your airy wings,  
 And hear your mother's lamentation.

*Richard III.* Act IV. Sc.



Again,

*K. Philip.* You are as fond of grief as of your child.

*Constance.* Grief fills the room up of my absent child,  
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,  
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,  
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,  
Stuffs out his vacant garment with his form;  
Then have I reason to be fond of grief.

*King John*, Act III. Sc. 6.

A thought that turns upon the expression instead of the subject, commonly called a *play of words*, being low and childish, is unworthy of any composition, whether gay or serious, that pretends to any degree of elevation: thoughts of this kind make a fifth class.

In the *Amynta* of Tasso,\* the lover falls into a mere play of words, demanding how he who had lost himself, could find a mistress. And for the same reason, the following passage in *Corneille* has been generally condemned:

*Chimene.* Mon pere est mort, Elvire, et la premiere epee  
Dont s'est armee, Rodrigue a sa trame coupee.  
Pleurez, pleurez, mes yeux, et fondez-vous en eau,  
La moitie de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau,  
Et m'oblige a venger, apres ce coup funeste,  
Celle que je n'ai plus, sur celle que me reste.

*Cid*, Act III. Sc. 3.

To die is to be banished from myself:  
And Sylvia is myself; banish'd from her,  
Is self from self; a deadly banishment!

*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act III. Sc. 3.

*Countess.* I pray thee, Lady, have a better cheer:  
If thou engrossest all the griefs as thine,  
Thou robb'st me of a moiety.

*All's Well that ends Well*, Act III. Sc. 3.

\* Act I. Sc. 2.



*K. Henry.* O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows !  
 When that my care could not withhold thy riots,  
 What wilt thou do when riot is thy care ?  
 Oh, thou wilt be a wilderness again,  
 Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants.

*Second Part Henry IV, Act IV. Sc. 11.*

*Cruda Amarilla, che col nome ancora  
 D'amar, ah! lasso, amaramente insegna.*

*Pastor Fido, Act I. Sc. 1.*

Antony, speaking of Julius Cæsar:

O world ! thou wast the forest of this hart :  
 And this, indeed, O world, the heart of thee.  
 How like a deer, stricken by many princes,  
 Dost thou here lie !

*Julius Cesar, Act III. Sc. 3.*

Playing thus with the sound of words, which is still worse than a pun, is the meanest of all conceits. But Shakespeare, when he descends to a play of words, is not always in the wrong; for it is done sometimes to denote a peculiar character, as in the following passage :

*K. Philip.* What say'st thou, boy ? look in the lady's face.

*Lewis.* I do, my Lord, and in her eye I find  
 A wonder, or a wond'rous miracle ;  
 The shadow of myself form'd in her eye ;  
 Which being but the shadow of your son,  
 Becomes a sun, and makes your son a shadow.  
 I do protest, I never lov'd myself  
 Till now infixed I beheld myself  
 Drawn in the flatt'ring table of her eye.

*Faulconbridge.* Drawn in the flatt'ring table of her eye !  
 Hang'd in the frowning wrinkle of her brow !  
 And quarter'd in her heart ! he doth espy  
 Himself Love's traitor : this is pity now ;  
 That hang'd, and drawn, and quarter'd, there should be,  
 In such a love so vile a lout as he.

*King John, Act II. Sc. 5.*



A jingle of words is the lowest species of that low wit; which is scarce sufferable in any case, and least of all in an heroic poem: and yet Milton, in some instances, has descended to that peu-rility:

And brought into the world a world of wo.  
 —begirt th' Almighty throne  
 Beseeching or besieging——  
 Which tempted our attempt——  
 At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound.  
 —————With a shout  
 Loud as from number without numbers.

One should think it unnecessary to enter a caveat against an expression that has no meaning, or no distinct meaning; and yet somewhat of that kind may be found even among good writers. Such make a sixth class.

*Sebastian.* I beg no pity for this mould'ring clay;  
 For if you give it burial, there it takes  
 Possession of your earth:  
 If burnt and scatter'd in the air; the winds  
 That strew my dust, diffuse my royalty,  
 And spread me o'er your clime; for where one atom  
 Of mine shall light, know there Sebastian reigns.  
*Dryden, Don Sebastian King of Portugal, Act. 1.*

*Cleopatra.* Now, what news, my Charmion?  
 Will he be kind? and will he not forsake me?  
 Am I to live or die? nay, do I live?  
 Or am I dead? for when he gave his answer,  
 Fate took the word, and then I liv'd or dy'd.  
*Dryden, All for Love, Act II.*

If she be coy, and scorn my noble fire,  
 If her chill heart I cannot move:  
 Why, I'll enjoy the very love,  
 And make a mistress of my own desire.  
*Cowley, poem inscribed, the Request.*



His whole poem, inscribed, *My Picture*, is a jargon of the same kind.

————— 'Tis he, they cry, by whom  
Not men, but war itself is overcome.

*Indian Queen.*

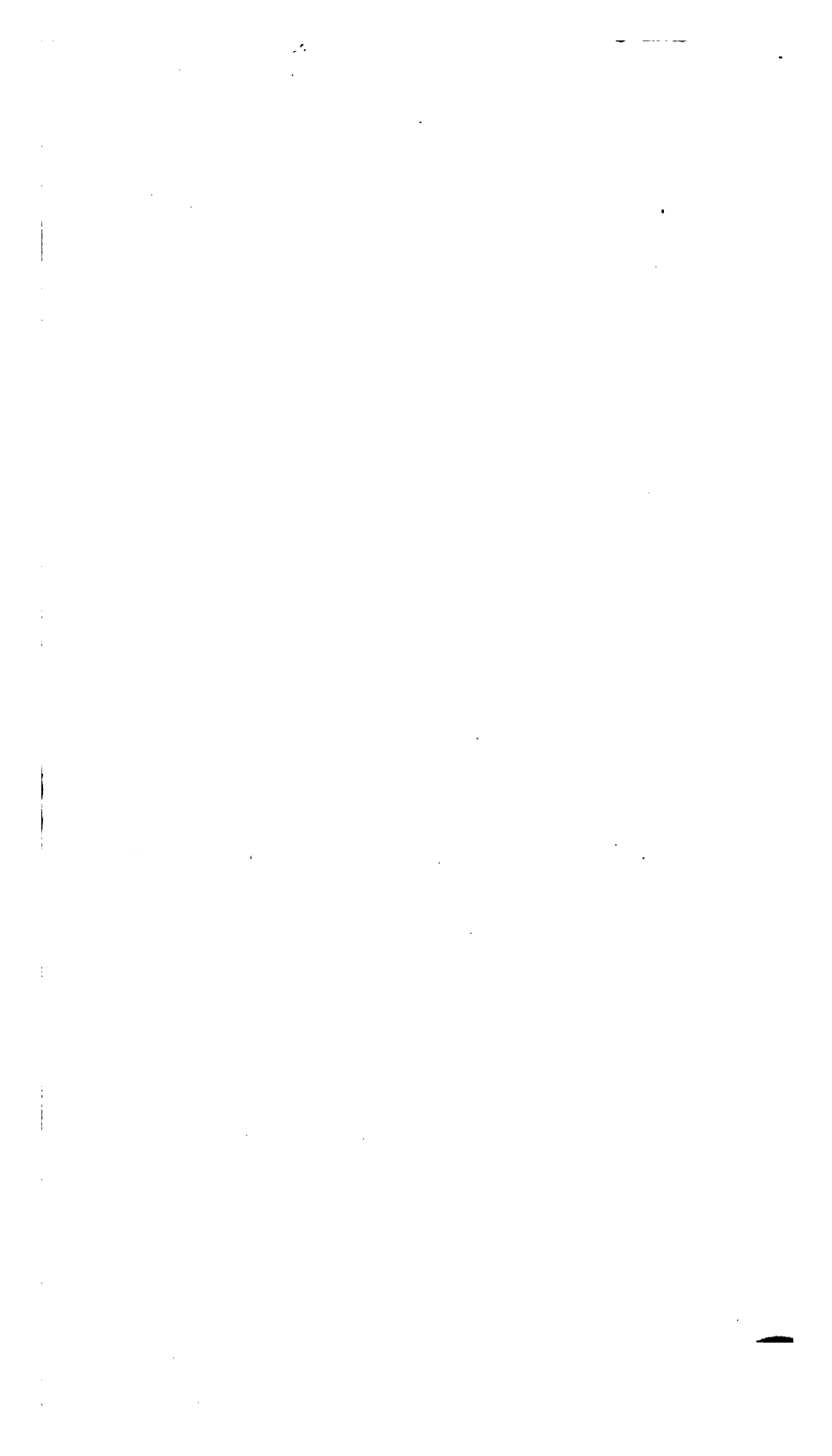
Such empty expressions are finely ridiculed in the  
*Rehearsal*:

Was't not unjust to ravish hence her breath,  
And in life's stead to leave us nought but death..

Act IV. Sc. 1.

END OF VOL. I.



















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